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A Journal of Opinion

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President, Congress and People

ON THE SURFACE, the great dispute between President Roosevelt and Congress over the tax-bill veto is ended. The President has assured Senator Barkley that he meant no reflection on the integrity of Congress. Barkley, unanimously reëlected as leader of the Senate Democrats, has replied to the President in conciliatory terms. Both Houses of Congress have passed the tax bill over the President's veto, with many votes to spare.

The President's enemies and his friends have both, in our judgment, overemphasized the importance of this specific dispute. His enemies have of course seized the occasion for a great propaganda drive, announcing that the incident makes a fourth-term nomination impossible. Strongly Republican papers have suggested that Senator Barkley himself would make an ideal Democratic nominee—and no doubt he would, from their standpoint. Some of the President's friends have said, on the contrary, that the country will rally to his support so completely that not only will he be reëlected, but we shall see a Congress in which a majority will firmly support his policies. Certainly, the next Congress doesn't need to be as bad as this one, but if it is better, it will be because of a lot of hard work before the next election by progressive Americans all over the country.

Senator Barkley's flare-up was doubtless the result of several causes. One of these was "war nerves"—a display of temper on the part of an overworked, overtired man. In addition there was the fact that he has felt disregarded by the President for the past year or more. He was never a genuine New Dealer; his attitude was always more a matter of personal loyalty to Mr. Roosevelt—and therefore subject to sudden change—than a matter of inner conviction. He has never understood the necessity for drastic taxation in wartime; in recent months he has been drawn more and more into the Jesse Jones faction. He was cut to the quick by the division in the Senate between the pro and anti-Roosevelt groups; he was terribly hurt when some of the more bitter anti-Roosevelt men from the South would hardly speak to him. One result of the recent incident is that Barkley now appears as the nominal head of the New Party in Congress, the alliance between Republicans and Southern Democratic reactionaries—what might be called the Rankin Republicans.

It is quite true in general that the President in recent years has been regrettably remiss in keeping up his personal contacts with Congress. Neither he nor his immediate circle of advisers have ever paid enough attention to mollifying the feelings of the men on the Hill. There was a time when bills were written in the White House and unceremoniously dumped upon the Democratic leaders in the House and Senate. More recently, the President has swung to the other extreme of keeping hands off so completely that he did not even give an inkling of his views on some important questions. He has managed to give many legislators the impres-

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sion that he considers them a necessary evil, to be bypassed if possible when they refuse to coöperate.

In the tax-veto message, the President was here and there a little tactlessly sharp in his language; but there was nothing at which any sensible man should have taken offense. Certainly there was nothing to justify a real breach between the executive and the legislative branches in the middle of a desperate war for our national survival.

As to the facts of the case, our readers hardly need to be told that the President was completely right and Congress was completely wrong. Indeed, the congressmen were so angry, in all probability, just because they knew in their hearts that they were wrong. The country is still threatened by inflation, and Congress still refuses to do anything adequate about it. This tax law is only the latest in a series of actions not one of which can be defended. The Treasury and the President asked for an increase of at least $10,000,000,000 and, if possible, $16,000,000,000. Congress passed a measure which ostensibly added $2,100,000,000, but since it canceled the scheduled increase in social-security taxes of $1,400,000,000 and also gave certain rebates of $150,000,000 or more, the bill in reality added to the tax burden only about half a billion. While England takes, in taxes, more than half the national income, we are taking less than a third. While Canada is paying half her war costs out of taxes, we are paying only a little more than a third. While British corporation profits remain at the prewar level, ours have doubled.

In many of its details, as the President pointed out, the new tax law is bad. It retains the Victory Tax, which raises little revenue, and drives taxpayers crazy. It means that your next tax blank will be about as complicated as your present one. It cuts off the power to renegotiate on war profits at the end of this year, far sooner than is desirable. It opens a loophole for excess-profits credits even after bankruptcy proceedings, and gives special favors to the lumber, natural-gas pipeline and commercial airline industries. Today, Congress' failure to halt inflationary tendencies is evident all over the country in the form of reckless spending. In Miami, Florida, as Philip Wylie reported in The New Republic of February 21, it has turned into a full-scale old-fashioned real-estate boom.

In short, while both President and Congress are to blame for the present ugly situation, Congress must carry at least 80 percent of the responsibility. The important questions are: How has this happened? And what can we do to remedy matters?

One important point, which has been mentioned by Quincy Howe of the Columbia Broadcasting System and by others, is that the struggle between President and Congress represents to some extent the divided mentality of the American people. The President embodies their will to win the war. Congress embodies their dislike of the sacrifices the war entails, and their individual attempt to wriggle out of sharing in those sacrifices. Despite all our losses and all the wholesale unhappiness the war has brought to seven or eight million families, we are not yet feeling the impact of the war as the British or the Russians or the Chinese have felt it. The year 1944 will undoubtedly be by far the bloodiest year of the war thus far; and as the long casualty lists come in, they should swing the balance toward the President and away from Congress. Fundamentally the Americans are made of just as stern stuff as any other people.

But there is of course a deeper problem about Congress, one that is not new, one that was only temporarily concealed by the emergencies of the depression and the necessity at that time for heroic rescue work. The fact is that the business interests of the country are heavily overrepresented in Congress and the interests of labor, farmers (the real ones, not wealthy owners of big industrialized farms) and consumers are heavily underrepresented. This accounts for the fact that public-opinion polls are always so much better and more liberal than the votes in Congress on the same issues. The polls get down to a level in the community below that at which effective power resides, below the level at which "safe" men are persuaded to run for Congress, deals are made with political bosses to support them, big contributions are quietly assembled to put through expensive campaigns.

Congress will continue to misrepresent the aspirations and legitimate demands of the millions of plain Americans, will continue to hamper our war effort, just as long as this situation goes on. There is only one answer. It is that the consumer, the farmer, the workingman shall shake off their political apathy, shall realize that vital interests of their own are affected, and shall nominate and elect their own candidates in substantial numbers. Never until that is done will this country begin to fulfill its promise.

The Changing Shape of the War

In both hemispheres, the shape of the war may be rapidly changing. In the Pacific, the Japanese are either running out of airplanes or are withdrawing them from their outposts in New Britain and New Guinea for special purposes. Apparently many of their troops in places such as Rabaul are to be left to starve or surrender, as a preliminary to falling back on defenses much closer to Japan herself. Meanwhile, our fleet has ranged far to the west, to Guam and the Marianas, and despite attacks by Japanese batteries and land-based planes, it did enormous damage at an amazingly low cost. If carrier-based planes and anti-aircraft guns on battleships can now outmatch land-based planes and guns, that fact is of the utmost strategic significance.

In Western Europe, too, the war assumed a new shape last week. For the very first time, Germany was bombed on the scale that the advocates of air war have

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been recommending. The effort was to cripple her production of fighter planes, and the day and night attacks from England and Italy are believed to have done this, to an important degree. Such attacks are still not a substitute for invasion, and despite Prime Minister Churchill's speech and the predictions by the German radio that invasion is postponed until next autumn, there is every reason to believe it will come soon. It will be much easier, however, if it is preceded by action which can cripple the Luftwaffe. For the first time, air power is getting a real chance to show what it can do.

William Green and Martin Dies

William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, has endorsed Rep. Martin Dies of Orange, Texas, for reëlection to Congress. When AFL members in Representative Dies's district had recovered from the shock of having their president declare himself on the side of their chief enemy, the Beaumont Trades and Labor Council held a protest meeting to make it clear that they still intended to fight Dies in Texas regardless of what Green did in Washington.

Green's national publicity man, Philip Pearl, has now added to the AFL political nightmare. The latest issue of the AFL weekly news service carries a signed article by Pearl, full of red-baiting attacks on the CIO Political Action Committee, and criticism of Sidney Hillman, chairman of the committee, for his refusal to open the books of his organization to the Dies Committee. Through Mr. Pearl, the AFL has thus become a party to Dies's plan to smother labor's political-action program before it can grow any stronger.

We do not believe that the Green-Pearl support of Dies against the Hillman committee will have the backing of AFL members throughout the country any more than Green's endorsement of Dies for Congress had the support of AFL members in Dies's own district. The rank and file of the American Federation of Labor know the score. They are joining with CIO and railway unionists in local political-action groups all over the country, and we predict that they will stick with the job they have undertaken, Bill Green to the contrary notwithstanding.

A World Food Board

Probably most Americans who ever heard of—and have not forgotten—last May's International Food Conference at Hot Springs, think that its work was finished with the creation of UNRRA, which is for the express purpose of conducting postwar relief. As a matter of fact, however, that conference was chiefly concerned, not with relief, but with the establishment of a permanent agency to aid long-term progress toward adequate nutrition on a worldwide basis. Its work will be as pertinent to some of the Allied countries not ravaged by war as to the war-torn regions, and it cannot be completed for years to come.

The Interim Commission appointed at Hot Springs to work out the plan for a World Food Board will probably present its report in about a month. It will decidedly not be a plan to feed the world on American charity. On the contrary, the basic principles adopted at the conference recognized the duty of each nation to attend to the nutrition of its own citizens. The international function will be to facilitate that effort. If the world is to be adequately fed, farmers everywhere, including the United States, will have a larger market than any of which they ever dreamed. The fundamental task of the World Food Board is conceived to be nothing less than the stimulation of a sound prosperity everywhere.

It is probably too much to suppose that this proposal, when it comes, will not be made a political football by narrow-minded opponents of the Roosevelt administration. But this sort of agency, though it requires careful and critical examination in detail, is in general more necessary for the prevention of future wars than all the world governments or police forces that can be imagined.

Falangists as Citizens

Any liberal will read with mixed emotions both the news that a Puerto Rican member of the Falange has been deprived of his United States citizenship on that ground, and Attorney General Biddle's statement that membership in that organization is incompatible with the right of citizenship. On the one hand, the Falange, which is an organ of Spanish fascism, is doing the work of the Nazi enemies of democracy in the Spanish-speak-

Drawing by Eric Godal. Copyright, 1944, by Field Publications and reprinted by courtesy of PM.

"Stop grumbling, Fritz. You finally have the bigger living room Der Führer promised you!"

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ing countries of the Western Hemisphere; no member of it could possibly be a good democrat. On the other hand, it is a liberal tradition that our country stands for political liberty, and that nobody should be deprived of his rights on account of his opinions, or for mere membership in any political organization whatsoever. We expect to preserve our democracy by the force of popular opinion, not by suppression of "dangerous thoughts."

No doubt Mr. Biddle is at least legally correct, since there is a law on the statute books (used in the Bridges case) that no one can be a citizen who belongs to an organization teaching the overthrow of our government by force and violence. This is probably not literally a Communist doctrine, but it certainly is a Falangist one. We are glad to see at least one high governmental official taking as strong a stand against the enemies of democracy on the Right as many have taken against those on the Left. No sensible liberal will of course endorse the doctrine that every constitutional right is absolute and may not be limited according to circumstances. Nevertheless we hope that the final judgment in this as in all other cases involving citizenship will be rendered in the light of Mr. Justice Holmes's famous opinion, that the test is not what a man believes or says, but whether his action or utterance under the circumstances constitutes a "clear and present danger" to the state.

Defeatist Liberals

Freda Kirchwey, editor of The Nation, was the recipient of a richly deserved homage in New York City a few days ago to mark twenty-five years of her association with that journal. She was given a purse containing a substantial sum, to help carry on the work of the paper, and a long list of speakers paid tribute to her. The New Republic, which has always thought of itself as more a collaborator with The Nation than a rival, is glad to join in that tribute.

One of the speakers, Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, painted a somber picture of the attitude of many progressives in Washington today:

> Liberals meet in Washington these days, if they can endure to meet at all, to discuss the tragic outlook for all liberal proposals, the collapse of all liberal leadership and the inevitable defeat of all liberal aims.
>
> It is no longer feared, it is assumed, that the country is headed back to normalcy, that Harding is just around the corner, that the twenties will repeat themselves in a blaze of chromium sinks, cabinet radios, glass-top automobiles and four-color unemployment—and that the peace upon which the hope of the world depends will not be made.

We trust Mr. MacLeish was indulging in the permissible hyperbole of the after-dinner speaker; or if he was not, that his friends among the Washington liberals are not typical of all of them. We agree entirely with him when he says that

> to accept the inevitability of reaction at this point in the history of our world and of our cause, to accept and to submit to the swing of the pendulum . . . is not faintheartedness alone, but folly.

Whatever may be the situation in Washington, we don't believe that progressivism in the country as a whole is in a defeatist mood. In some other parts of the world, it is doing very well, thank you—in Canada, for instance, where the CCF expects soon to be the second party in power. And as far as we are concerned, we serve notice now that we believe the fight for a decent world has just begun. We know both from her own speech at the dinner in her honor and from the columns of The Nation from week to week, that Freda Kirchwey and her associates agree.

Attention, WPA and OPA

Our readers, and perhaps the above-named agencies, may be interested in The New Republic's No. 1 wartime shortage. It is something of an Achilles heel. Heretofore the lowly kraft-paper wrapper in which the magazine is mailed to subscribers has been taken pretty much for granted. A supply of this least important and least expensive of the papers we buy could be insured by the expenditure of fifteen minutes of the business manager's time at quarterly intervals.

Not so, for many months past. Kraft paper has "gone to war," or if not, it has gone somewhere else. We hope it is fighting the Axis and not lining the pockets of profiteers, but as to this we have no reliable information. We do know, however, that kraft, which has a wide variety of uses but is apparently subject to no effective government control, is all but unobtainable for wrappers. Ceiling prices are generous, being at least 175 percent of prewar levels, but there just is *no* paper in the hands of our wholesalers. To find a substitute we have resorted to expedients that consume an inordinate amount of our time and involve a disproportionate expense. Part of this issue, for example, and all of the next, will be wrapped in a paper more costly than our regular stationery. Subsequent issues will be mailed in bond wrapper which costs more than any other paper we have ever used, with minor exceptions, for any purpose whatsoever.

In striking contrast is the story of the paper on which the magazine is printed. Thanks to the International Paper Company (adv.) and to government control, we have enjoyed greater security than in peacetime. By strictly adhering to numerous and precise government regulations and carefully budgeting their production in the interest of their customers, the IPC has taken the problem out of our hands and solved it for us. And the price has not risen. Meanwhile we ask again: where has kraft paper gone? If it is fighting the Axis, well and good. If not, we shall demand, at the very least, a congressional investigation.

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The Reader's Digest

THE READER'S DIGEST, which is discussed by Richard H. Rovere on page 310 of this issue, has come in for a surprising amount of publicity lately. It has been denounced on the floor of the Senate by Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania, who suggested that its habit of making exclusive contracts with other magazines for reprint rights might constitute a conspiracy in restraint of trade. The New Yorker magazine, as Mr. Rovere reports, declined to renew its contract with The Digest on somewhat the same grounds. Time and Newsweek have carried articles about this development. PM announces that it is about to publish a series of articles dealing with The Digest. The New Yorker is preparing a profile of its editor, DeWitt Wallace.

Walter Winchell in several recent broadcasts has criticized the actions of Paul Palmer, one of the Digest editors. A number of periodicals, including The Nation and The New Republic, have attacked individual articles in The Digest, including Henry J. Taylor's wild charges about "global boondoggling," Louis Bromfield's prediction last August that we should all be starving this February, Max Eastman's tirades against Russia and Sen. Hugh Butler's clumsy criticism of the good-neighbor policy. The Digest has also been under attack for a long time by the Communist press and we understand that some of the editors believe all public criticism of anything in its pages is just "a Communist plot." But this is obviously untrue, unless you describe as a Communist anybody who is not a reactionary Republican. There are, for example, more than 27,000,000 people who voted for Roosevelt in 1940. With their families, they constitute at least 60,000,000 persons, nearly all of whom might be expected to resent the propaganda, which appears so extensively in the pages of The Digest, against "bureaucracy," "global idealism" and "radicalism" in the federal government.

In the recent public criticism of The Reader's Digest, three main points have been made: first, that by its exclusive contracts for reprint it tends to obtain undue influence over all magazine publishing in this country; second, that articles are written by its own staff or by other persons paid by The Digest and then planted in outside periodicals so that they can be "republished" in its pages; and third, that while pretending to be an impartial magazine which reprints nearly all the best articles from other periodicals, it has developed a definite and aggressive editorial policy of its own.

The charge that The Digest, by paying an annual retainer to magazines for the right to reprint, gets life-and-death control over these magazines, would be brought forward only by someone ignorant of the publishing business. The Digest doesn't pay enough to be of such importance to any periodical which is itself of any importance in the commercial world. It has been suggested that editors might injure the value of their magazines by strenuous efforts to prepare material which they think The Digest will buy at a high price and reprint, but there is no evidence of this. The Digest, we understand, complains that all the magazines available, in combination, do not provide enough material for its pages, and this fact is supposed to be responsible for the comparatively new technique of articles written under its direction and then planted elsewhere to be reprinted. (To some extent, of course, The Digest is now the prisoner of its vast circulation; it fears to print things that will appeal to any audience smaller than one of several millions.)

Some critics have made much of the device of farming out articles, arguing that it enables The Digest to spread its own propaganda in other places. But in fact, no editor needs to use an article submitted by The Digest if he doesn't want to. He gets no financial advantage from doing so except the comparatively insignificant one of receiving a piece of copy for which he need not pay the author. The editorial cost of the average magazine is such a small part of the total that a single piece of free copy is a small inducement. At a rough guess, 80 or 90 percent of the articles The Digest seeks to farm out in this way are non-political and non-controversial in character, dealing with science, adventure or biography. The other 10 or 20 percent go exclusively to periodicals like The American Mercury, which share The Digest's political views. The Digest's own circulation is so tremendous, something like 9,000,000, that preliminary publication of a propaganda article somewhere else adds very little to its total effectiveness.

Among writers the charge is sometimes heard that The Digest pays such high prices everybody in the country is trying to write for it, and is imitating its highly concentrated, depersonalized and therefore somewhat tasteless style. But a glance at the facts shows that there are plenty of able men who do not appear at all in its pages.

The final criticism of The Digest is to our eyes the most serious. When it began 20 years ago, it did in fact reprint most of the best writing from current American periodicals, and it did so without any predetermined editorial policy of its own. Today it has such a policy, and it rejects a substantial amount of good writing in the magazines which does not conform to its specialized political and social views. That is one reason, and perhaps the chief reason, why The Digest finds it necessary to write articles and give them away in order to have them reprinted. And that is why The New Republic, which was closely associated with The Digest in its earliest days, and accepted a contractual relationship when it was first offered, will no longer use material which originates in the Digest office and is intended for eventual reprint there. If The Digest wants to expose its 9,000,000 readers to some of the good liberal

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doctrine from the pages of The New Republic, we shall be happy to have it do so—happy and surprised, in view of the way its policy has recently been shaped. We are convinced that the early ideals of The Reader's Digest are incompatible with its present aggressive attitude, and that unless it returns to its former principles, it will have to take its place openly as an extremely conservative magazine, prepared by its own staff of contributors, and on all fours with other conservative magazines like the Crowell, Curtis and Hearst chains.

Baruch Report (Cont'd)

THE VARIOUS BARUCH PLANS for terminating war contracts, disposing of surplus war materials, getting rid of government-owned war plants and reëmploying veterans and war workers, are not off to a very good start. With great haste, two appointments have been made that could hardly be any worse. To dispose of surplus property, Will Clayton, right-hand man to Jesse Jones, has been chosen. Like Jones, Clayton is a fanatical opponent of the New Deal. Like Jones, he is a fanatical believer in unrestricted big business. Like Jones, he is disliked and distrusted by labor and liberals. The other appointment is that of Gen. Frank T. Hines to conduct the reëmployment of veterans and war workers. Hines, who is hardly known at all outside Washington, is an old-line bureaucrat of Harding's day, who is hostile to the New Deal and to the sort of government aid that will be needed to cushion the shock of the transfer from war to peace economy.

It is a great pity that the various Baruch reports were lumped together and made public simultaneously, thereby dumping in immediate and long-time projects, the controversial and the non-controversial, the good and the dubious or bad. Mr. Baruch is right on a number of points. He is right in saying that terminated war contracts should be settled with the utmost possible speed. He is right in saying that payments should be made at once and supplemented by loans if necessary to keep contractors going. He is right in his numerous provisions to prevent fraud and scandal: negotiations to be conducted by teams of government men, not individuals; all operations to be "in a goldfish bowl"; records to be preserved at least three years. He is right in saying that goods should be sold off by the branch of the government which knows most about them—ships by the Maritime Commission, and so on. He is right, as far as he goes, in seeking to prevent sale of war plants in such ways as to foster monopoly, by subdividing big ones into small units, giving the preference to local purchasers and selling in some cases on the instalment plan. He is right in urging that Congress should keep in close touch with all these operations and should pass legislation from time to time creating national policies. He is right in saying that plans should be completed now for useful public works to be started after the war. He is right in saying that a postwar tax bill should be written at once and put on ice so that it could be made operative in a hurry.

We disagree with the Baruch suggestions on only one main point; but it is so serious that in our judgment it outweighs all the others. The report stresses the desirability of eventually selling off all government-owned factories. This seems to us a serious mistake, and we hope it will seem so to Congress as well. At the very least, the government should retain some of these plants for yardstick operation, to make sure that private competitors treat the public fairly, and to stimulate technological research. No plant should be sold without a continuing government voice as to whether it shall be closed down or kept in operation, and as to whether it will be used as part of a monopoly or cartel system.

We said last week that as to surplus war plants, "the Baruch report opens the door to graft on a vaster scale than has ever yet been dreamed of." Probably it would have been more accurate to say that the report fails to close that door. We don't believe that any or all of Mr. Baruch's safeguards will prevent the sale of government property at tremendous losses, when the buyer knows that the seller is determined to get rid of the property at once for whatever it will bring. We predict that through dummy purchasers or otherwise, the plants will in fact eventually fall into the hands of big monopolistic organizations which will restrict production. This is especially true if operations are conducted by a man like Will Clayton.

War is a terribly expensive business, and we must expect heavy sacrifices in the process of conversion to a peacetime footing. But that is no reason why we should deliberately set out to make our losses even worse. Now is the time for American liberals to fight for the interests of the people as a whole as opposed to the interests of the little special group for whom Mr. Clayton is the spokesman.

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The Hang-Back Boys

I KNOW THAT LIBERALS should fight reactionaries, not each other. I know, too, that splinter groups on the Left are too small and too lacking in influence to be worth much attention. Even so, I ask a few minutes' consideration of a phenomenon that I feel is worth a little thought. I refer to the group of individuals and periodicals—in theory well to the Left—who are "sitting out" this war. I don't mean that they are literally refusing all coöperation in the war effort; most of them, I don't doubt, go through the usual motions of war-bond and blood-bank patriotic activity. But their hearts are not in it. They are spiritual saboteurs, the hang-back boys.

This group contains diverse elements that must be differentiated. Some of them are liberals; some are Socialists, ex-Socialists, Trotskyists or ex-Communists. Not all agree on all attitudes; but they agree on enough of them to form a considerable and cohesive body. Among them are to be found various periodicals, including those representing right-wing socialism, left-wing socialism, the moribund Progressive movement in Wisconsin, and a new journal, sharply leftist, devoted to politics and economics. The individuals include, among others, a former editor of a well known liberal journal, a radical editor from the days of the First World War, several newspapermen formerly stationed in Moscow, a Yale professor, a Socialist politician, the book critic of a daily newspaper, an ex-muckraker of Wall Street, a popular historian, a labor publicist, a liberal New York clergyman, the publicity man for a Midwestern university.

Most of these periodicals and men are opposed to President Roosevelt and the New Deal. Their opposition is based on disliking some of the things done in Washington, apparently without ever stopping to consider that the alternative to what we have now is not Utopian perfection but a Republican in the White House and, in all probability, a violent swing to the Right, to ideas and measures which have been opposed during all of their lives by the men I have been describing. To be sure, some of the Socialists, Trotskyists and ex-Communists from time to time express a contempt for mere "liberal reform," based upon their general philosophy; and they are entitled to more respect for their position than are opportunists who make their decisions on partial or frivolous grounds. But even the genuine radicals cannot remember to be consistent about their wholesale skepticism; most of the time they favor or oppose day-to-day activities, like anybody else.

A number of the members of the group I am discussing are opposed to the plan for compulsory national service, overlooking the fact that the President also opposes it unless it is accompanied by measures to guarantee just treatment to labor and a sharing of sacrifice by the whole community. They also talk darkly of secret commitments which they believe were made by Mr. Hull at Moscow or by Mr. Roosevelt at Teheran. Oddly enough, however, some of these critics are surprisingly friendly to the State Department, and speak very mildly or not at all of Darlanism in North Africa, Badoglioism in Italy, or flirting with Franco in Spain.

This attitude may be the result of one or more of at least three causes. The individuals may have a fellow feeling for the State Department because they sense that it, too, is anti-New Deal. They think of themselves as being hardboiled realists, and may consider the critics of State Department policy to be dreamy, impractical fellows. Finally, it is rumored that at least one section of the group enjoys a pipeline to a prominent State Department official, and supports his views, even when they are markedly anti-liberal, for reasons which would doubtless require a whole psychoanalysis to make clear. The over-all paradox continues: that large numbers of Americans who profess to be progressive are constantly fighting an administration which, despite all its faults, comes closer to being genuinely progressive and humanitarian than any other in our history.

To leaf through the periodicals of these soured liberals and their allies is a curious experience. You will find page after page devoted to haggling over one aspect or another of the Roosevelt administration; witch-hunting of Communists and fellow travelers in America which would be more appropriate in the Hearst press; a great deal about the crimes of the Russian government, and almost nothing about the crimes of Germany and Japan. I share with these gentlemen their dislike of the American Communists, and of communism itself; but I certainly do not choose to elevate my dislike into a whole career, at the expense of everything else that is going on in the world—and particularly when this requires that one should greatly exaggerate the importance of the tiny minority of Communists in the American scene.

So far as the liberals are concerned, one can understand, even if he does not share, the mental processes that have brought them to their present dead end. As he existed in the twenties, the liberal was more likely to be a critic than a man of action; he was brought up in a world where other people did things and he sat back and complained about them. These men have simply carried these mental habits over into a period where they are highly inappropriate.

Despite a popular impression to the contrary, many liberals were inclined to be isolationist during the twenties and thirties. The older ones were successively disillusioned about the last war, Wilsonian idealism, the

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peace terms, the League of Nations, the German Republic and French foreign policy. Perhaps most of all, they were disillusioned about Russia, as they gradually discovered over the years that doing away with private capitalism doesn't automatically bring the millennium and may indeed be followed by class war, dictatorship, terrorism, the muzzling of free expression even in the arts, and the total eclipse of civil liberty as it is known in Great Britain and the United States. These liberals were for years inclined to let Europe "stew in its own juice." They listened receptively to Dr. Beard and others, who told them that America could successfully close the gate and cultivate her own garden. Munich and the first stages of the war only solidified them in this feeling. A few of them flirted with America First, although the majority had too much discretion to get caught in such an obvious and wide-meshed net.

Where they differed, and still differ, from other people, including the editors of The New Republic, is that they never believed (and perhaps still don't) that this country was in mortal danger from Germany or Japan. They refused to admit that Hitler intended to rule the whole world and had a very good chance of doing so. They went on repeating the pacifist slogans even after it was painfully apparent to everybody else that these slogans no longer fitted the case. Some of them continued to talk this way even after Pearl Harbor.

The hatred of Russia is a phenomenon by itself. In the case of the Trotskyists, of course, it is due to the feeling (to some degree well justified) that Russia has deserted communism and has persecuted those who, like Trotsky, clung to it. Some of the ex-Communists have swung to the other end of the pendulum arc, displaying fully the neurotic and unstable personalities which attracted many of them to communism in the first place. Numerous liberals of course have been disillusioned about Russia for the reason mentioned above. One should add that some of the I-hate-Russia group have found this attitude extremely profitable, financially and otherwise. These gentlemen make a fat living out of retelling endlessly the story of how dreadful the USSR is. They can now get big fees from mass-circulation magazines whose pages would certainly be closed to them on any other subject. Socially, too, doors are now open that would otherwise be barred. Perhaps they enjoy, unconsciously, being taken seriously, for the first time in their lives by the "solid, respectable elements" in the community.

Whatever the reasons, here you have the curious spectacle of scores of highly vocal individuals, and several supposedly left-wing papers, which seem a good deal more concerned to call Russia names than they are to win the war. They snipe constantly at our Russian allies, predicting in one breath that they will make a separate peace with the Germans, in the next that they will overrun not merely Germany but all western Europe, and in the third, that their worldwide ambitions are such that we shall have to fight them, and before very long. As already noted, there are whole issues of these magazines that say hardly a word against Germany or Japan, but many hundreds of words about the wickedness of the Russians, and especially about the resistance that should be offered to their ambitions in the Baltic states and eastern Poland.

It seems to me not at all difficult to say where this attitude departs from common sense. It is perfectly true that many terrible things have been done in Russia in the past, and very likely more of them may be done in the future. By now, it should be clear to everyone that the Russian government is not engaged in any philanthropy, at home or abroad.

Coming down to specific cases, it should be obvious that in the matter of a boundary dispute like that on Russia's western frontier, it is important for the future of the world that wherever international machinery of adjudication can legitimately be invoked, it should be used. If territory is allotted to a power toward whom some of the local population feel deep animosity, these individuals should be given the opportunity to go elsewhere. But reasonable men will consider these factors in the light of certain others. The Russians insist that they are asking only the return of territory alienated from them years ago. They insist that the majority of the inhabitants are racially and through personal preference legitimately reclaimable by the USSR. These points are at least entitled to consideration, by reasonable men. But the hang-back boys do not engage in such consideration. They simply shut their eyes, open their mouths and proceed to scream about the wickedness of the Russian government.

Finally, there is the fact that we are engaged in a war which we should quite possibly lose, in spite of everything, if Russia were to drop out in the near future. Indeed, we should in all likelihood have lost long ago, if Hitler had not made the supreme mistake of turning east instead of west after Dunkirk. It is a war in which the enemy is making every possible effort to split the Allies. I do not think he will succeed; I believe that Russia, which did not enter the war for any altruistic reason, but because she was forced into it, will now recognize that her safety depends on the complete annihilation of the Nazi power. Yet I am sorry to see Hitler being aided by I-hate-Russia men and papers, who, with utter disregard of the danger to the country, continue to pour forth day by day and week by week, their vituperation and scorn.

It seems to me, on the whole, a regrettable spectacle: a number of men, some of them decidedly able, who are refusing to take any real part in the struggle between fascism and democracy. These men have become mere sideline sitters; they no longer have any

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sort of program of their own, or if they have one, it is indistinguishable from that of the tories who want desperately to get rid of Mr. Roosevelt and are certainly more hostile in the long run to communist Russia than they are to Nazi Germany. While other men fight against fascism in this country, try to make the war into a democratic revolution throughout the world, as it already is in certain areas, try to keep this country from slipping into the grip of reaction, the hang-back boys are silent, or raise such feeble voices that they are unheard. Mostly they stay at home sulking in the cellar. They have deliberately cut themselves off from the two great centers of dynamic energy in the world today. With all its faults, one of these is the Roosevelt administration; and with all its faults, the other is Russia.

The hang-back boys may have begun with the theory that they would remain above the battle (though their malevolence and hysteria seem inappropriate to that position). Perhaps they felt that they would keep the torch of truth alive, no matter what part of that struggle might go on beneath their lofty eminence; that they would act as the spur of conscience to those engaged in the heat and dust of the fray. But if so, they have demonstrated that there isn't any room for ivory towers in a worldwide struggle such as is in progress at the present time. Ivory towers are vulnerable to artillery from any camp. The calmness and aloofness, such as they are, become about as pleasant as similar qualities in someone who stands disinterested on the bank of a stream where women and children are drowning. When the history of this generation comes to be written, it looks increasingly as though the hang-back boys would play a very minor role. BRUCE BLIVEN

Bedaux and His Friends

IT IS PERHAPS a shame to moralize about Charles E. Bedaux, the international grifter and fascist who committed suicide in the immigration service detention home in Miami recently. There was so much in his life and death worthy of direction by Alfred Hitchcock that it seems to destroy artistic unity to point out the shabbiness of the man, and to remind ourselves that fascism is not necessarily something in Europe. It may be flowering next door to our democratic-minded family, with its true viciousness deceptively covered over by the familiar, the ridiculous or even the moral aspects of everyday life.

The suicidal end of Bedaux had bitterly ironic dramatic aspects. When he was brought to this country from Africa in December, after his arrest by military authorities, who knew of his dealings with the Nazis and the Vichy fascists, Bedaux had one thought in mind—to avoid deportation to French Africa, where the French National Committee would have shot him without much ceremony. So Bedaux spent a month convincing the immigration authorities at Miami, as well as Edward J. Ennis and John E. Burling, special assistants to the Attorney General, that he was a citizen of the United States. When he convinced the authorities of this, the authorities informed Bedaux that the priceless boon of American citizenship entitled him to be charged with treason. The unhappy Bedaux then hoarded enough sleeping tablets to do an efficient job of killing himself.

Bedaux' rise to fortune and power is generally known. He came here from France as an immigrant about thirty years ago, conceived the speed-up, to which he gave the scientific name of "Bedaux system," and rose high as an "industrial engineer." He left this country in 1927, and developed his system all over Europe. The dispersion of his "efficiency offices" gave him entrée into industrial plants over the world, and ideally fitted him for the post of industrial espionage agent for the Nazis.

The man's audacity in crashing into high circles was incredible. When the Conservatives and Laborites in England forced Edward VIII off the throne because he wanted to marry Mrs. Simpson, Bedaux communicated with the ex-king, now the Duke of Windsor, and invited him and his bride to be married in his $900,000 chateau in France. Bedaux didn't know the Duke of Windsor from Adam, and vice versa, but the royal love birds were looking for a roof that wasn't too shabby, and accepted the parvenu's invitation. Thus began a long friendship, marked by expressions of admiration for the Duke of Windsor by Bedaux on the very eve of his suicide.

Bedaux crashed high Nazi society quite as simply. When Hitler assumed power in Germany in 1933, Bedaux' office was closed. (One recalls that there were some phony "radical" aspects to early Nazism.) It took Bedaux three or four years to get back into the good graces of the Nazis. He found that Hjalmar Schacht had a mistress, one Frau Koefken-Hempel, who was a sculptress of mediocre talents. Bedaux became her patron, and gave her generous commissions for a bust of himself, another of Mrs. Bedaux, and a third piece which he gave the Windsors as a wedding present. Frau Koefken-Hempel was duly impressed with this live wire from France, and introduced Bedaux to Herr Schacht, who in turn introduced the adventurer to Fritz Wiedemann, a high-ranking Nazi who charmed his way into many important places in this country. Bedaux, after this introduction, became intimate with Otto Abetz, Joachim von Ribbentrop and

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others of the master race. That he was their industrial espionage agent seems beyond doubt. Bedaux opened a Turkish office at the behest of Wiedemann, and turned the extensive industrial files of his central office at Amsterdam over to the Nazis.

Bedaux saw in Marshal Pétain a rising figure of fascism and curried his favor with similar boldness. He hired a sculptor to conceive a heroic statue of Pétain, mounted on a horse (happy thought) and reaching down in a friendly exchange with a foot soldier. The aged chief of state was duly flattered, and soon after Bedaux and Pierre Laval are found exchanging sweet nothings in their mail.

But to the disturbing part about Bedaux, and the attendant lecture, which I say tends to destroy the dramatic unity—

In his efforts to convince the government that he was a United States citizen, Bedaux submitted a list of names of people who he said would testify favorably as to his character, his integrity and his complete loyalty to the United States. Many of these names are in "Who's Who in America." Some are the names of executives of large corporations which either have German holdings or have been named defendants in government suits against international cartels whose machinations with the Nazis did so much to stymie our own preparedness for war. At least one person is widely known in politics. Another is an important financier. Another is a big steel producer, with mills in Germany. The Department of Justice, perhaps rightly, has withheld these names from publication. Bedaux was such an opportunist that he would stop at nothing in the desperate plight in which he found himself at Miami.

But even so, why did Bedaux, after being out of this country for 17 years (except for a hurried and unhappy trip in 1937, when he made abortive arrangements for the "good-will" tour of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor), think that so many eminent Americans would take the witness stand and testify favorably as to his character, his integrity and his complete loyalty to the United States? Perhaps the persons whose names were submitted as character witnesses for Bedaux would be horrified at the suggestion. Perhaps if Bedaux had not been charged with treason they would have taken the stand and so testified.

Perhaps, as I indicated above, fascism is not just German storm troopers; nor little Italian boys listening to a round-heeled bum tell them they are sons of the wolf; nor yet little children in Spain being trained by the state which keeps their 500,000 mothers and fathers in concentration camps. Perhaps it is the vice-president of your bank or the head of the little precision-instrument factory down the street from you. Perhaps it is a little unworthy corner in the heart of each of us, as Vice President Wallace has indicated. All I know is that in a politically pure democracy, Charles E. Bedaux, the international grifter and fascist, could crowd all his true friends into a telephone booth. I wish there were some way of knowing the validity of his list of "character witnesses." EDWIN A. LAHEY

American Magazines in Wartime[1]

THE UNITED STATES is a nation of magazine readers. The British, French, Russians and Germans read, in normal times, far more books than we do, but fewer and smaller magazines. When the average American wants to spend an evening improving his mind, he turns not to his favorite poet or philosopher (he has none) but to The Reader's Digest. That is his food for thought. When he seeks solace or entertainment in the printed word, he looks to the fiction in The Saturday Evening Post, to folk characters like Scattergood Baines, Ephraim Tutt and Chief Engineer Glencannon. American women get both information and entertainment from The Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's and The Woman's Home Companion. Both men and women learn, or see, what is going on in the world in Life or Look, while some sophisticates keep a closer eye on things in Time or Newsweek. If the reader's taste is either higher or lower than the average of these magazines, he can find satisfaction in dozens of other periodicals up and down the scale. But these, and a few more like them, are the mass magazines, and the mass magazines are this country's popular literature. Books still reach a relatively small audience. Newspapers give us the day's news and, in comic strips, a few belly laughs. Movies seldom pretend to anything more than light entertainment. But the mass magazines—each issue containing something to suit the reader's every mood; each page laid out to fill and relax his color-craving eye—are our literature, our adult education, our culture.

Like the movies, the radio and the press, the magazines naturally defend the dominant values of the society in which they thrive, and rarely rise above them. To criticize the magazines for being what they are is merely to criticize those values. Taking them for granted, however, the magazines, it seems to me, speak better for our culture than most of the other idols of our marketplace. They assume, at least in their non-fiction, a higher degree of intelligence and intellectual curiosity than do the movies and newspapers. Politically, they are a few shades less reactionary than the daily press. Even in its worst days The Saturday

[1] This is the seventh of a series of articles. The eighth will be "Sports in Wartime," by John R. Tunis. – THE EDITORS

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Evening Post was not in the same class with the Hearst or McCormick-Patterson newspapers. Now that Bernarr Macfadden has lost control of Liberty, no large magazine carries the standards of organized reaction. When, on rare occasions, the magazines deal with serious human issues, they are never as cheap or inane as the movies. They may lack esthetic values altogether, but even the fiction is written with an admirable kind of correctness, and they are not guilty of assaults on the English language like those made by the movies, the newspapers and, worst of all, popular songs. The information they dispense may be incomplete, but it is generally accurate and as often as not, important. Obviously, they reveal the weaknesses of American life, and are afraid of its real strength, but I do not think they prey on our weaknesses to quite the extent other mediums do. I am not trying to say that our magazines are above criticism, but I think it relevant to observe, for purposes of comparison, that the inevitable man from Mars would get a somewhat higher impression of us from our magazines than he would from our movies, radio or newspapers.

What effect has the war had on the magazines? Fundamentally, very little. It has, of course, immensely increased circulation and advertising revenues. Although in England paper rationing appears to have helped the magazines to improve themselves, making them less dependent on advertising and forcing them to exercise greater editorial discrimination, wartime restrictions here have had no such effect thus far. Most magazines are slimmer and less lavish than in prewar years, but they still offer plenty of slickness, glitter and paper for the reader's money. On the whole the institution remains unchanged. Fiction, by far the weaker side of popular writing, is as puerile as ever. The smooth, bloodless, beautifully Aryan young men who used to wander through Good Housekeeping in bathing trunks are now decently clad in khaki, and the wry, harassed family providers, the butt of so much American humor, now have their little adventures in plane-spotting posts. But of course they have not changed, for they never were human. Except for an occasional blood-and-thunder piece about Russian or Chinese guerrillas, the fiction is still unsubtly oriented to middle-class illusions and aspirations. Plots are still concocted by changeless formulas; humor is still adolescent; the writing is still workmanlike but never bold. Some editors occasionally publish writers like William Faulkner, Kay Boyle and Eudora Welty, but as a rule their courage fails them on the far side of Somerset Maugham, Stephen Vincent Benét and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. First-rate spy and detective stories turn up with fair regularity, but most mystery writers are as banal as Faith Baldwin.

Fiction has not improved, but advertising, which the war has changed, is worse than before. And for a very simple reason. Before the war advertisers were interested only in selling their products. Now they give us their wisdom, and their wisdom is vastly inferior to their products. The story of the financial steal being made through "institutional" advertising will provide one of the juiciest postwar exposés.[1]

A year after Pearl Harbor an industrious journalist labored long in the pages of the ten largest magazines (aside from Life and The Reader's Digest, which are special cases) and brought forth an analysis[2] of the kind of articles they were publishing in wartime. He found that of 556 articles that appeared in seven months after December, 1941, 48 percent were devoted to such subjects as Hollywood, athletics, successful business men, radio entertainers, and so forth. Twenty percent were factual reports on foreign countries and their political leaders. About the same percentage dealt with our armed forces—articles on military strategy, how the Garand rifle works, I-Was-on-Corregidor, how the tank corps trains its men, General MacArthur's wife. Of four articles on labor, none was more serious than a platitudinous essay by William Green in The American. There were several articles on individual congressmen, but no discussion of the role of Congress. Negroes, Jews, Japanese Americans—the whole race problem? Nothing at all. Of hundreds of stories dealing with one phase or another of the war, not one dealt with the basic problems of our foreign policy—Darlanism, relations with Russia, our niggardly treatment of China, international cartels. Science, invention and technological change got wide coverage, but no writer ventured to suggest where it all might be leading us.

As quantitative analysis, this sounds just about right, and roughly the same figures would approximately describe the situation today. But the author might have saved himself a good deal of effort by simply noting that the magazines avoid ideas, ideas in every shape and form, as painstakingly as they solicit advertising. Forced, in a time of great events and increasing public seriousness, to say something about politics and world affairs, they concentrate scrupulously on the revealing but noncommittal fact, skirting controversy at the mere threat of its appearance. The wonder, to my mind, is not that they have so little to say about the State Department, but that, avoiding such critical matters, they manage to say anything of even remote importance about American life. Yet quite often they do. The America of the short stories is as mythical as any Ruritania, but in the hands of the magazine journalists it often comes surprisingly alive. At least its steel mills roar like real ones; its talk, its follies and its folkways are reported and with considerable insight; through the "profile" form, now used everywhere, one can see some of the delicate shadings and complexities of persons in public life, even though one will never learn

[1] See "Advertising in Wartime," by "Madison Avenue," The New Republic, February 21. — THE EDITORS

[2] The Slicks Are Scared, by William Jordy. Common Sense, December, 1942.

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from the magazines exactly why these people are where they are. Using a reportorial technique borrowed partly from the muckrakers, but more heavily from the innovators at Time and The New Yorker, both of which are masters at arranging facts and ignoring ideas, writers like Maxine Davis, Samuel Lubell, Walter Davenport and Alva Johnston often draw sensitive and balanced portraits from contemporary life.

Reading the magazines you can follow the progress of the war in as much military detail as any one man could master. But you could never get from them even the faintest notion of why we are fighting. How often have we said that while we are winning the war of men and machines, we are losing the war of ideas?

The big business of magazine publishing, as Robert Cantwell has pointed out,[1] began with the McClure's of the progressive period. Before the muckrakers started their prodigious unearthing of political corruption, Harper's, with a circulation of 130,000, led the field. The figure had been exceeded only for a brief period in 1850, when Godey's Lady's Book sold 150,000 copies a month. When, after a row with the publishers, Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell and Ray Stannard Baker walked out of McClure's, its circulation had reached 750,000. At the same time other magazines—Colliers, Everybody's, The American and Cosmopolitan—left the 100,000 class and began looking toward a million. The muckrakers had started something. They had brought news into the magazines, and a very exciting kind of news, too. Or perhaps more important, as Cantwell believes, their triumph had been essentially a literary one. They had, like so many of the poets of their day, given Americans the stories and the names they knew. Whether this or the news element accounted for their success, the muckrakers had started something, and they made the magazines grow.

The advertisers moved in at the peak of the muckrakers' success. They had been able to ignore the magazines that published romantic fiction and literary criticism for the élite on the Atlantic seaboard, but they could not afford to ignore millions of avid readers in all classes and from all sections. The buyers of popular magazines represented one of the largest blocs of purchasing power in the country; they were the mass in mass production. When manufacturers found this new way of reaching the mass, they not only expanded their market greatly but they put the magazines on a new financial basis. In the last century periodicals were supported entirely by their readers' cash; early in this century they became dependent on advertising. The nickel, dime or quarter that the reader paid covered only a fraction of the cost of production. In fact, its real function was less to help defray publishing costs than to assure the industrialist that people wanted the magazines in which his wares were advertised.

[1] In America Now, edited by Harold Stearns. Scribner's, 1938.

The muckrakers left McClure's and bought The American. They had to quit to escape the tyranny of S. S. McClure, but soon they found that even a magazine democratically controlled by its own high-minded writers was subject to outside pressures, particularly from advertisers. Steffens, for one, felt that the self-imposed restraint of this coöperative venture was more objectionable and more deceptive than the dictatorial ways of the former employer. He resigned and the others soon fell out among themselves. Ironically, The American, under new management, was soon to become the most pious of all worshipers at the shrine of business success.

Under the impact of advertising, the magazines changed in many ways, but the journalistic techniques of the muckrakers, stripped of their political implications, remained. The new magazines published fiction of about the same quality their predecessors had used, but it was aimed more directly at the middle class and became more self-consciously American; French and British noblemen were supplanted as heroes by the native variety of nature's nobleman. Editors made greater efforts toward humor, the light touch and lively illustration. They discovered that American women made excellent copy and also that American women would buy anything that told them how to improve their homes and how to do it easily. And, although the editors knew that most readers still paid out their money for entertainment, they never failed to devote a portion of their contents to a broad, capable and, within certain clear limits, realistic coverage of American life. As the years went by, they kept widening their appeals, and circulation kept rising steadily, unchecked even during the depression.

This pattern has worked perfectly for almost thirty years. The magazines that follow it still, collectively at least, dominate the field. Today, however, the two largest American magazines are comparative newcomers, and both are based on new, though different, appeals. The Reader's Digest, which has 9,000,000 readers in this country and 1,000,000 more abroad, carries no advertising, no short stories and little illustration. Life, which 4,000,000 Americans and Canadians buy each week, carries a great deal of advertising, no fiction, and is almost all illustration. Despite innumerable attempts, no imitator has been able to stand the competition of The Digest (mainly because its exclusive-reprint agreements give it an effective monopoly in its class), but Life's circulation becomes even more impressive in the light of the 2,500,000 steady readers of Look.

It seems to me more than likely that these two monsters of magazine publishing will set the tone for the future. Different as they are, both appeal to strong traits in the mentality of the twentieth century. They are made to order for the man in a hurry. He may be a man who wishes to know the latest about the situation

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in Turkey, but he wants—indeed he is forced—to learn on the run, picking up his knowledge in neat, small packages. We have all of us been conditioned by the movies and the five-minute news broadcast; Life gives us pictures and The Digest gives us brevity. Like the daily newspaper, they both give us many opportunities to fill, with real or apparent usefulness, the brief interludes of our lives. They are edited for the moments we spend waiting for the street car and the last ten minutes of the lunch hour, the times in which the average person does most of his reading today. Both have learned the value of giving the reader a "story," of supplying vicariously, as fiction does, the experiences denied him in real life. To visit a showgirl's apartment with Life's photographer is every bit as good as to go with the fortunate hero of a short story—and better, too, because it is real and the eye can see what the mind, reading fiction, would have to envision. The Reader's Digest does much the same thing with fact. Rather than cover a story in its largest outlines, it will seek out the individual element and give plot, suspense and human interest to the subject by viewing it through the eyes of one man.

All this is perfectly legitimate journalism, and yet it seems clear that it is leading the magazines toward increased superficiality at a rapid clip. I say this without for a moment forgetting that both magazines, and especially Life, have done some excellent work. No publication, for example, has gone further than Life in trying to bring ideas before its readers. Its editorial page, written by Russell Davenport, has been consistently intelligent and often courageous. While other magazines dared not touch the issues involved in the coal strike last spring, Life made a bold and sympathetic interpretation of the miners' case. True, it has been the outlet for Henry Luce's pronouncements on the American Century, but the American Century, whatever you may think of it, is at least an idea for the future, and most magazines have yet to discuss, much less propose, a program. When, early in the Italian campaign, there was danger of a deal with the House of Savoy, Life published an eloquent warning against appeasement, by G. A. Borgese.

Still, there is slight reason to suppose that editorial courage has anything to do with Life's popular success, and The Reader's Digest, although it has used its economic independence to call the bluff of many advertisers, has shown no eagerness to deal forthrightly with ideas. Life's success is unquestionably based upon its handling of pictures. By no means the first picture magazine—*vide*, The New York Times's elaborate Mid-Week Pictorial, long since dead—it was the first to arrange photographs so that they tell a story, rather than to scatter them around in the kind of rococo designs that Henry Luce called "cookie shapes." By dignifying semi-pornography as sociological inquiry, Life brought the undraped female out of the Police Gazette and into the family journal. Every issue makes some concession to the voluptuary. Life makes its readers feel that they are learning something about American history when they examine the beards of a half-dozen patriarchs whose careers are summed up in two-line captions. It will explain inflation with pictures of experts, generally photogenic, and outline their varying positions in the standard captions of an even two lines. In general, it acts on the assumption that anything short of pure abstraction can be explained in pictures.

Magazines used to argue that they were particularly valuable to those who lacked the time to read books. The Reader's Digest was designed for those who were too busy to read magazines. Its function was to cull the best passages from the best articles in the best magazines. For some time, however, it has been following a greatly modified procedure. Many of its articles now appear in its columns for the first time. As long ago as November, 1936, Fortune stated that "it not only pays generous fees to thirty-five magazines for exclusive reprint privileges but even supplies certain of the magazines, gratis, with original articles which The Reader's Digest proceeds to reprint and condense the following month."

The editors of The New Yorker, in declining to renew their contract with The Digest, explained their position in the following letter to their contributors:

> The Digest started out as a reprint magazine, but grew into something quite different. Nowadays a large proportion of its contents is frankly original with The Digest and not presented as reprint material; and of the stuff that is presented as reprint material much actually originates in the office of The Digest and then gets farmed out to some other magazine for first publication. The effect of this (apart from spreading a lot of money around) is that The Digest is beginning to generate a considerable fraction of the contents of American magazines. This gives us the creeps, as does any centralization of genius. The fact seems to be that some publications are already as good as subsidized by The Digest. Our feeling is that if The Digest wants to publish a magazine of original material, it should do so in a direct manner. We believe it should not operate through other publications to keep alive the reprint myth. We don't want to be in the position of receiving for consideration a manuscript that has already been bought and paid for by someone else, for we regard such a situation as unhealthy. We were willing to be digested, but we are not willing to be first supplied, then digested.

This change has come about largely as the result of the publisher's belief, certainly justified by results, that he knows better than any other editor what magazine readers want. DeWitt Wallace, founder and owner of The Digest, has learned that they want their capsules even smaller than those originally dispensed. He has learned that they want more humor in their lives. Chiefly he has learned that they want what they read to be constructive, to hold out hope, except in matters

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bearing on the federal government. No mass magazine has ever taken a consistently dark view of life, but none has gone so far as The Digest in celebrating good cheer, and the trend has become more and more noticeable amid the encircling gloom of the last few years. When The Digest publishes an article on production, it tells how two soldiers took war jobs and in their spare time produced, hour for hour, umpteen percent more than the regular (union) operatives. It would like nothing better, I am certain, than to hear of an armless worker, who, running his machine with his feet and hoeing his victory garden with his toes, produced more cartridge shells and bought more war bonds than anyone else in his factory.

Most of the currents of our time seems to favor this kind of journalism. The pace of our life, quite aside from the temporary exigencies of war, demands speed even in the communication of knowledge and ideas. A materialistic culture fosters the illusion that we can understand something if only we can have it pictured for us. The sheer bulk of our printed literature encourages the idea of abridgment and predigestion. The principle of selectivity, spurious or otherwise, for which The Digest still stands in the minds of its readers is enshrined even in the field of books, where at long last we are approaching mass distribution not through educational or economic measures but through institutions like the Book-of-the-Month Club and the immense apparatus recently launched by Sears, Roebuck and the Gallup Poll. The evidence in the case does not rest upon Life and The Digest alone. In recent years the older magazines have been frantically trying to adopt the new formulas to their own problems. When Ben Hibbs succeeded Wesley Winans Stout as editor of The Saturday Evening Post, he promptly began to shorten articles and to introduce more picture stories. All the magazines have been moving in this direction. They have sought the visual appeal by making typography louder than ever, and gradually the photograph, or the photographic technique in drawing, is coming into use even to illustrate fiction; notice how many magazines now use photographs on their covers. Much can happen in the next few years, but the trends which Life and The Digest represent seem certain to dominate the magazines, as they have dominated so many areas of American life. Moreover, if the postwar plans of many magazines succeed, they will be carried abroad. Time, Newsweek and The Reader's Digest already are planning to become international. I should not be surprised, ten years from now, to see The Digest boasting 200,000,000 readers for its Basic English edition.

I have not, in this article, tried to go beyond discussion of the mass magazines, which are only about 15 out of approximately 7,000 American periodicals but which account for perhaps half the combined circulation of all. As a matter of fact, the connections between the great popular journals and the rest of the field are in most cases tenuous, often almost nonexistent. The vast majority appeal to special-interest groups—ranging, say, from the Sunday-school pupils of the Two-Seed-in-the-Soul Predestinarian Baptist Church to the great number of Americans who read magazines like The American Home and Popular Mechanics. Many magazines, the hundreds of "pulps," for example, carry almost no advertising and so are on a completely different economic basis. The great trade journals are often read principally for their advertising and so are on a different footing *vis-a-vis* their readers. Much could be said about the phenomenon of "true crime" magazines and the comics, but what might be said would have little bearing on any others.

RICHARD H. ROVERE

Poison from the Right

GERALD L. K. SMITH, self-styled "pulpit-pounding, Bible-reading, grass-roots American," will call his own convention and nominate Charles A. Lindbergh for the presidency of the United States on an America First Party ticket, if the Republicans "sell us out" and call on a "New Deal Fifth Columnist" like Wendell Willkie again. This is what he told about 600 loyal followers, many of whom spoke excellent German, at St. Louis at an organizing committee meeting on February 17.

America's number-one rabble-rouser sounded off variations on a familiar theme for two hours and ten minutes while proving himself master of the unfinished sentence. His faithful kept cheering "Atta boy, Gerald!" and, in the manner of a prayer meeting, shouting amens. Smith's targets for invective were President Roosevelt, Vice President Wallace, Wendell Willkie, Felix Frankfurter, Harry Hopkins, and "that Jew, Walter Lipshitz Winchell."

Smith claims that more than 3,000,000 have already been enrolled in the newly created America First Party, an offshoot of the America First Committee which went to the bottom with the ships at Pearl Harbor. Smith announced he will shortly make a nationwide tour to win more adherents. An adherent is one who contributes at least $1 a month to Gerald L. K. Smith, P.O. Box 459, Detroit.

Smith can no longer be laughed off as the leader of the lunatic fringe. His audience, mostly men and women past middle age, consisted of typically unsophisticated persons whose emotions can be reached by praising Christ and denouncing drink. It contained the professional Roosevelt-haters, Jew-baiters, Anglophobes and Russophobes. They cheered "great Americans" like Charles E. Coughlin, Clare Hoffman, Gerald Nye; booed the President, the Vice President, Churchill, Stalin and especially Winchell.

The domestic program Smith advanced for saving

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America in 1944 contains three points: (1) Throw *all* Roosevelts out of office; (2) send Willkie to Moscow; (3) make Wallace a milkman in China.

By and large, the denunciation of Willkie was based on C. Nelson Sparks's hysterical monograph, "One Man." Smith, however, labeled the Republican 1940 standard-bearer "the biggest fake and hypocrite in politics, save one, who is more satanic and cunning." The reference to the President was obvious. Wallace, he called the head of the Communist Party in the United States and attributed the recent dissolution of the Comintern to Wallace's usefulness here.

Smith demanded the impeachment of Wallace and Frankfurter for "betraying their oaths to uphold the Constitution of the United States," called for throwing the "rascals" out of Washington, by whom he meant the entire New Deal, particularly the Frankfurter protégés, the "little hot dogs"; and urged the Jews to stem the rising tide of anti-Semitism in this country by choking "that rat Winchell."

His foreign program is the encore call for isolationism. Britain has no business playing American politics, nor has the United States any right to stick its nose into British and Canadian affairs, said Smith. If we can exploit the Russians' desire to save their country, Smith will agree, "but no Russian communists or any dirty-necked intellectuals can tell us what to do."

"I'm just a natural, old-fashioned Christian American," the former campaign manager for Huey Long declared. "It's getting to be that if you love Christ and love America, you've got to prove you're not a traitor." With half-truths like these, Smith wins followers. His audience, except for the handful of liberals and reporters there to learn how America's fascists are thinking, agreed overenthusiastically.

Repeatedly he told his audience such things as that he had "promised his mother never to make a speech without mentioning the name of Christ"; "we only put our faith in Christ above America First"; or the "un-Christian internationalists are trying to put over the greatest confidence game in history."

In an appeal for Negro support, he told the few Negroes among the audience not to believe stories put out by New Deal Communists that America First seeks to promote racial hatred. "We're the true representatives of the Lincoln tradition," he bellowed.

Smith urged his America First Party followers to press for a constitutional amendment limiting the presidential term to eight years, bragged that at Mackinac Island the Republicans had lifted passages out of The Cross and the Flag in framing Republican policy, and expressed a desire to bring men like Clare Hoffman to speak to his legions throughout the country.

It is possible that Smith's formation of the America First Party may be a financial racket. He said no committees would be formed, so he could keep his followers "out of the red-hot spotlight of bureaucrats and enemies." Followers are asked to place donations in envelopes and only attach their names, if they wish. But whether racket or not, this is a dangerous movement. Gerald L. K. Smith is no harmless circus clown; his purpose and methods must be denounced for the destructive poisons they are.

St. Louis, Mo. ARTHUR HEPNER

A Negro Looks at the South

THAT STRAINED RELATIONS between whites and Negroes in America are on the upsurge, despite the widely heralded prophecy of the Four Freedoms for minorities and oppressed peoples, is borne out by day-to-day occurrences. The causes of such friction should not be difficult to find. But when the prosecuting attorney in a large Midwestern city places *sole* blame for bloody rioting on the Negro, one begins to wonder. In like vein, so-called leaders, white or Negro, cannot assume total responsibility for the analysis and solution of the problem; for the major responsibility for the spread of this cancerous growth rests with the mass of the common people and, because of this, the ultimate solution also rests with them. For the Negro, alas, major steps toward the mitigation of racial segregation and discrimination are often forestalled, since, either deliberately or unwittingly, these contravene the dicta of Southern customs and tradition.

What does the Negro want in America? Quick as a flash, the bourbon white Southerner and his Northern counterpart contemptuously bellow: "Why, social equality, of course!" Nor can I deny that the Negro craves social equality. The fly in the ointment, though, is that the irate white conceives "social equality" as the desire, on the part of an irresponsible black, to mate with a white woman. "Intermarriage!" the Negro answers. "What a ridiculous issue to raise, when I am struggling to make a decent living, while fending off unprovoked acts of discrimination and prejudice. Certainly I want 'social equality,' but in the humanistic sense of the term. Don't I know, better than you, what meaning this term carries for me? Respect of the worth of human individuality is involved here."

In sum, *I desire the unabridged opportunity to participate in all those shared relationships of human society for which I am constitutionally fitted.* In everyday parlance, this means that I can work at any job for which I am competent; attend any school for which I possess the educational requirements; patronize any place of business or amusement for which I can pay;

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cast a vote for my candidate unmolested; buy a home in the residential section that attracts my fancy; or look to the police officer for protection rather than maltreatment—just to mention a few desiderata. Civil liberties is the name for such privileges. But, for me, they remain nothing more than shibboleths; moreover, what happens when I attempt to obtain them? Would that I could share Editor Virginius Dabney's sanguine conviction that the Negro "is less apt to be lynched than at any time since the Civil War, that he is more apt to obtain justice in the courts, and that his educational opportunities are far better." Perhaps times are better than they used to be—but the question with me is "How much better?"

First of all, let's talk about lynching. Do you refer to the old-fashioned or the modern method? It used to be sport for a sadistic mob to string a Negro—yes, any Negro—to a nearby tree. In those days, these were more or less isolated cases. Today, lynchings parallel the blitzkrieg technique popularized by Hitler. Seared by a flame of race hatred, mobsters descend upon Negro "ghettos" with bludgeoning clubs and blazing revolvers, in place of rope and faggot. "Haven't you heard about that mess in Beaumont and the flare-up in Detroit?" We should whisper that they were race riots, since we are now engaged in all-out war effort. What does it matter that scores of Negro homes were reduced to shambles? "Weren't they too good for those 'uppity' niggers? They were making too much money anyway!" What difference does it make if the majority of the dead and injured were Negroes? "A few dead niggers won't hurt, anyway. It will teach 'em that they'd better stay in their place! Do you suppose it's true about that white woman in Beaumont *not* being touched by a nigger? Any nigger would rape the first white woman he'd have a chance to. I just can't believe she wasn't!"

But lynching is lynching, any way that you look at it. Nor can this malady be cured by the insistence of Southern states that they be left alone to handle this delicate problem. To bolster their argument that they can and will abolish lynching, these states prate loudly of "state sovereignty" and issue bland announcements of reputed declines in the number of lynchings. Of course, the Southern states are not alone in their tendency to lynch Negroes, for Northern communities, more than seldom, stage such mob orgies. While it is true that there has been a decline in the number of lynchings, it is also equally worthy of notice that there are still lynchings of Negroes, some of which never reach the eye of the general public. Hence, when one takes into account the subtle fashion, alluded to above, in which the Negro *is* being lynched in America, the immediate need of a federal anti-lynching law should become obvious. For, as long as *any* lynchings—white or black—occur, the spirit of "Judge Lynch" still lives.

Of grave importance to the Negro is this matter of police intimidation and "double" justice in the courts. At once, this brings up the question of the Negro and crime. I shall not attempt to repudiate the thesis that a considerable proportion of Negroes commit criminal acts. However, I would like to call attention to the type and causes of these misdemeanors. For the most part, the Negro is not addicted to planned crimes. His offenses seem to fall mainly in the categories of petty thievery and unpremeditated killing. Why is this? Again, the fabric of Southern society is responsible. Goaded by his submarginal status, as reflected in restricted job opportunities and poor housing, the Negro gives vent to a natural upheaval of frustrated human emotion, acting to live the best way he can—especially when honest efforts appear unavailing. Gallant indeed is it for liberal whites to endorse Negro policemen for Negro neighborhoods, in Southern communities; but while we are waiting for this to come to pass, these liberals might well direct suggestions for restrained action to those white minions of the law who, political sycophants that they are, proceed upon the principle that you beat the Negro first and ask questions afterward. But why, in the first place, should Negro policemen be confined to Negro areas? It would be a fine lesson in democracy to station Negro police officers in both white and Negro neighborhoods. My ears are ringing with the stinging rebukes that, I am told, certain Southern jurists deliver to black culprits, advising that the Negro "better not listen to those agitators from up North and to remember that the South is a white man's country." Even as I say this, I am mindful of the fact that there are courts in the South and Southern peace officers who take their jobs seriously enough to be fair in their administration of justice. Unfortunately, they are in the minority.

A prime medium in conveying a distorted picture of the alleged criminality of the Negro is the "white press." Pursuing a persistent policy of the studied omission of news relating to the wholesome progress and activities of Negro life, in favor of the prominent display of items depicting degrading conduct by Negroes, the white press has tended to perform a disservice to the Negro. (Incidentally, the shortcomings of the white press have permitted the radio, through its nationwide chains, to become a more articulate champion of rights for the Negro, even though some Southern stations cut such programs from their schedules.) Other practices, such as the use of small "n" in Negro, deletion of such titles as "Mr." and "Mrs." when referring to Negroes and the burying of deserving Negro news in the back pages, have a dangerous psychological effect upon both white and Negro readers. By all means, print news of crimes committed by Negroes. But don't forget that the great mass of Negroes are law-abiding and restrained in conduct.

Of course, there is good reason why the Negro does not enjoy those civil liberties guaranteed him by the

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Bill of Rights. None would gainsay that an individual shares in privileges to a degree corresponding to his role in producing such prerogatives. In this instance I am thinking of the disfranchisement of the Negro. Denied full use of the ballot in virtually the whole of the South, the Negro has small chance to vote for the extension of civil rights, or for those candidates who will husband these liberties. There is no need to recount here the struggles of those who have been fighting for the repeal of the poll tax. Suffice it to say that the red herring of "unwarranted invasion of states' rights" is once more being dragged across the trail. Again, as in the case of lynching, our Southern states solemnly aver that they can solve this problem by themselves. Small solace, however, is offered in the recent 3-to-2 decision of the Tennessee State Supreme Court which declared the repeal of Tennessee's poll tax, by the 1943 legislature, unconstitutional. This is a striking answer both to the supporters and to the antagonists of an anti-poll-tax measure. The day of miracles has not yet arrived. Undoubtedly, the power of the federal government must be invoked.

The South does not seem likely to relinquish its theory of segregation for the races and its doctrine of "white supremacy." Take this excerpt from a campaign speech of a Mississippi gubernatorial candidate: "No candidate for Governor will do more to maintain states' rights and white supremacy than I will, and no one is more strongly opposed to Communists and Northern Negro agitators trying to bring about social equality between the races in this state." The Southern Governors' Conference, in a session last spring, concurred in the above view—even as they discussed, *sotto voce*, the problem of emancipating the South from the economic yoke of interstate slavery. Curiously enough, too, they complain about the lack of manpower, when they have an untapped source of Negro labor—skilled and otherwise.

If I were a Southern gentleman, I should not be too sure that *only* Northern Negroes are engaged in so-called "rabble-rousing." Rumbles of discontent are emanating strongly from the bailiwick of the Southern Negro. He has been oppressed and deprived of a decent living so long that he is now deciding that he must bring his battle out into the open. Called upon to sacrifice his blood on foreign battlefields and yet browbeaten on the domestic front, the Negro is steadily being driven to the point where he will die for liberty at home. Many of his race say now that they will fight—even physically—no matter what the cost. Of course, clear-thinking Negroes and discerning whites do not desire a racial war. They know that this will only intensify the problem. Yet, even the intelligent Negro is both disgusted with and suspicious of any continued system of segregation. *He wants liberty to live as a free man.* Hope grows dim, though, as even liberal-minded whites either evade the issue of segregation or else propose that the Negro make his segregated arrangements equal to those among whites. Can't they see that they, too, are nurturing the root cause of racial tension. As I see it, the naked problem revolves around a question of attitude. Education, in segregated schools, strengthens the attitude of racial intolerance, and education, free of segregation, must modify it. No doubt the elimination of segregation will be a long-term process, but the danger lies in our awaiting a "natural" change in attitude, when, at the same time, *we are deliberately solidifying into a mold of race hatred the very attitude to which we look for ultimate relief.*

It is all well and good for a prominent Southern leader to urge "'the awakening South' to lead the nation back into the democratic, American way of life." But, the real democratic way of life does not embrace the partition of racial groups into *separate* ways of life. The South might as well recognize the fact that its continued insistence on an outmoded pattern of segregation is its own stumbling block on the road to democracy. While reactionary elements, in both North and South, add to the dichotomy in race relations, as they woo the myth of "white supremacy," the best-thinking elements in both races should pool their intellectual and practical resources in the carrying out of a realistic program which will unequivocally affirm the principle of democracy among all groups. The Negro is going to take a more active role in political affairs—particularly the coming presidential campaign. No longer will he give unswerving loyalty to any one political party. Instead, the most serious consideration will be given to choosing the man within a political party who actually espouses the democratic ideology. If Willkie is sincere in "One World," then he typifies the type of candidate who will suit the Negro. But the Negro wants to be sure that Willkie, or any other potential nominee, practises true democracy.

Truthfully, then, the South must put us back on the royal road to democracy. And, when I say the South, I mean a South that has spilled over its regional boundaries to fasten grasping tentacles of race phobia on the remainder of the land. In fact, it should be stated here that the North should not criticize the South too severely for its mistreatment of the Negro; in all fairness, one must admit that there exists in the North the same pattern of race relations I have ascribed to the South. Moreover, I willingly concede that there are other factors that hinder our progress toward complete democracy; but, even here, the race issue muddies the stream. Then, too, I should proclaim that we are moving toward a democratic state or else, I, a Negro, living in the South, could not pen these lines. The question, though, is: How and when will we reach this state? *Segregation, definitely, is not the answer.*

REID E. JACKSON

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Washington Notes

Barkley's Bombshell

THE BARKLEY RESIGNATION EPISODE was good drama, whatever else it was. Reporters were on the Senate floor at five minutes to 12 for their customary chat with the majority leader. Mr. Barkley brushed in stormily with Leslie Biffle, secretary of the Democratic majority. "Don't argue with me, my mind is made up!" he ejaculated. The secretary withdrew, crestfallen. Mr. Barkley had baffled Biffle.

As the session began, Mr. Barkley paced nervously through the preliminaries, sending a Senate page for the wooden lectern from which to read his speech. As in most really great scenes in Congress, the public galleries were about two-thirds empty. The press gallery, however, was jam-packed, and as the word spread, members of the House trooped over and stood all around the rear.

Mr. Barkley normally has an easy, extemporaneous delivery, but in this case, because he stuck to text, he stumbled badly. There was no doubt of his emotion, however, and the Senate was dead silent. Nobody had ever heard a majority leader denounce his own party president before.

Barkley started his speech with only about six printed pages of text, and elderly, fusty, Senator MacKellar "ran copy" for him as he continued, bringing in freshly typed pages on two occasions just as Mr. Barkley seemed on the point of running out. A tempestuous Washington day sent alternating shadows and sun through the translucent double-glass roof as Barkley proceeded—a wonderful melodramatic effect worthy of Hollywood. Newsmen had their bulletins—"Barkley resigns"—all written, for the word of his determination was generally known by now. When Mr. Barkley actually uttered the word there was a tremendous uproar in the press gallery, transcending all decorum, as copyrunners sprinted up the steps and swept through the rear swinging glass doors with the "flash." All their lives that stampede of feet will haunt newsmen who heard it. Following this, members on all sides rose and applauded, in defiance of Senate rules, while Barkley sat, flushed and heavy and a little anxious: a normally mild, easy-going, gum-chewing and likable politician, strung up now to the greatest scene of his life.

What did it all amount to? Primarily, I think, that a phony issue had been substituted for a real one. The phony issue is Mr. Roosevelt's alleged "usurpation of powers." The real issue is what columnist Ernest Lindley trenchantly describes as "full mobilization v. money-making and politics-as-usual." For the smudging of the real issue I think Mr. Roosevelt must take part of the blame.

If the reader will go back and study the texts of Mr. Roosevelt's annual message, budget message, soldiers'-vote appeal and now the two veto messages (all five since the first of January), he will find a definite pattern running through them. The Commander-in-Chief is trying to rouse the nation to measure up to its responsibilities—to fight a "hard" war. But Congress wants a "soft" war. In no place is the issue drawn more sharply than on taxes. Mr. Roosevelt is overwhelmingly right on taxes. The country can and should pay more revenue, and the failure to do so may be measured in a host of problems now and later.

But it is not sufficient for a political leader, who is also Commander-in-Chief, to be merely right on a subject; he must also, alas, be successful. In this tax veto Mr. Roosevelt took a bad licking which seemingly might have been avoided. The defeat was in two parts. First, the veto itself was overridden, almost certainly as a result of the Barkley speech, the most important permanent effect of this being the probable "freezing" of social-security contributions for keeps, which means a radical alteration of the whole fiscal set-up. The second result was the bigger danger to Mr. Roosevelt's own prestige as war leader, and the obfuscation of the basic issue of backing up the boys at the front, on which the President may be basing his fourth-term campaign.

Personally I do not question Mr. Barkley's good faith. He is an easy-going conservative, and one of the instruments upon which a president must lean. Mr. Barkley tried to protest the veto message at the preceding Monday legislative conference at the White House. Mr. Roosevelt certainly did not realize the depth of Barkley's emotion. Mr. Roosevelt is slightly deaf in his left ear, and occasionally declines to listen out of his right. From what I gather, this seems to have been one of those times. Changes in phraseology here and there would probably have made Barkley's protest perfunctory.

Mr. Roosevelt was also handicapped in this fight by his failure to pave the way for it by proper militancy over taxes in the past. His sound tax proposals have generally cried in vain for hard-hitting defense. One reason has been an excessively timid Secretary of the Treasury who, like some other Cabinet members, is a political liability rather than an asset. It wasn't like this in Ogden Mills's time.

The chief thing to note is that the fight isn't over yet. Mr. Roosevelt may be staking his war leadership on it. He is backing a "hard" war, and the question is whether the public will support him. With the cross-channel invasion and the worst casualties of the war just ahead, Mr. Roosevelt may once more prove himself a better judge of public sentiment than a half-hearted Congress.

Trivia: War Mobilizer James Byrnes, 64, referring to postwar planner Bernard Baruch, 73, calls him affectionately "the old gentleman." . . . Secretary Ickes, author of the proposed Arabian oil deal, frankly welcomes attacks from the Left, arguing that they will help conciliate conservative senatorial critics; certainly few projects have had more mixed criticism. . . . The Chicago Tribune is opening up a characteristic blast against presidential counsel, Sam Rosenman; the latter, incidentally, denies he helped write the tax message. . . . Washington officialdom is now almost completely convinced that the primary reason for recent Soviet constitutional changes is domestic, not, as suggested, to get "17 delegates" to a new League; incorporation of Baltic and other states should be easier for Russia with proposed local autonomy. . . . Anti-New Dealers hope to make the public trial of Admiral Kimmel and General Short next summer a source of embarrassment to the administration. . . . Fight over extension of the price-control act will come up at about the same time and

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will be used for same political purpose by Roosevelt foes. . . . New White House secretary William Hassett hasn't got his own office yet, doesn't even get a seat at press conferences.

Washington T. R. B.

The Great Cardboard Event

"THE SONG OF BERNADETTE" is an overwhelmingly careful failure to present the religious career of Bernadette Soubirous, who in Massabielle, France, in 1858, saw a beautiful Lady who called herself the Immaculate Conception and produced a healing spring at the place of the vision. The script for this modern religious movie epic is uninspired to the point of tedium, and has been produced as though the entire picture were on trial before the Catholic Church. It is so cautious that near the end the whole production appears to be turning to stone: when people bend they creak, lifetime associates meet and come together with all of the recognition of ambulating sculptures, and they look at each other with paralyzed faces. It is actually one of the most sick, wracked films I have ever seen: there are several people who talk as though they had nasal catarrh, most of them look as if they were wearing deathmasks, and the heroine (Jennifer Jones) has been directed to be retiring to the point of evaporation. Everything is very delicate. I think that in general woodenness has been confused with seriousness, sensitivity and piety, that almost childlike idiocy has been confused with the goodness and the religious passion of a young girl, and that an arrangement of tableaus is confused with a movie.

"The Song of Bernadette," besides lacking grease for its joints, is dry of situations, movie devices and character insight. It has two basic images—both static: Bernadette kneeling in a grotto watching the beautiful Lady, and a talk between two or more village people or Church people to try to disprove the fact. Neither Bernadette nor the villagers and the Church are characterized sufficiently. The villagers, who are the leading performers, have been done more humorously, exactly and richly by a dozen prewar French movies.

The difference between the French prewar products and this, as far as showing French people is concerned, is that we seem to stop our characterizations with the casting and the costuming, and thereafter take our characters out of their environments and events to exhibit them in show-off fashion like prize hogs. Even the air seems to be on exhibit in "Bernadette," as the freshest, most real, pearly air in captivity, along with the other fixtures. There is no relationship to a period, a richly differentiated manner of life or a defined environment. Our films have a baldness, while those that the French made had a definite pigment, texture and substance. The talk, which here is the one device, is sprung out of great, devouring close-ups, each of which has been designed as a masterpiece of painting. The production of a Hollywood epic is pushed to such a level of pretentiousness and is so thorough that nothing can escape it: even Marcel Dalio (the remarkable player who accompanied Gabin in the escape in "Grand Illusion"), who of all the people in the picture is aware of the temperament of a petty bourgeois and did present its idiosyncrasies in his policeman in "Bernadette," is nevertheless just as much a museum piece as the rest of the players.

I doubt whether the producers knew much—or dared to—about Bernadette's life. Her movie biography, as scant as it is, is standard for famous movie biographies: she came of poor but honest people—a baker and his wife who had four children and lived in the basement of a prison which was too cold to serve as a prison; she was ridiculed and harassed by society until she died for believing in her vision; everyone who had ridiculed or doubted her was punished or apologized; she died—of a tumor and tuberculosis of the leg—but happily in sight of her Lady. The discussions as to whether she was the real thing or not—as in all movie biographies—take up most of her life and get the picture nowhere except in length and conventionality.

Bernadette is characterized in the film by giving her a strangely unsure, mincing walk, a baby voice and a completely passive nature. She is portrayed in general as very pretty and doll-like in the manner of a children's-book child-saint; the entire movie to my mind is conceived on the terms and for an audience that reads children's books. It is consecrated to not analyzing anyone's ideas, character or profession beyond an insufficient hint, a cliché characterization or a light tap on the wrist hurriedly followed by a hearty slap on the back. The atheist, Vincent Price, is slapped a little harder, but the slap is so belated and insincere that it is one of the worst moments in the movie.

For whatever service it may be to movie-goers, I should like to list fairly often what I think are the best of recently released films. At the moment they are "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek" and "Phantom Lady." MANNY FARBER

The Bandwagon

Meanwhile, Mr. Shaw made it clear in London that the money would not be spent until after his death. "At the time my wife made that will [bequeathing $400,000 for a foundation to help polish the manners of the Irish] I was seriously considering doing the same thing for the English," he said. – *From The New York Herald Tribune.*

Encourage risk-taking by individuals in the higher brackets by making the surtax on incomes of $20,000 a year or more half as much on income in the form of dividends as on income in the form of salaries or interest. – *Point 8 in a tax program from the leaflet, "Free Enterprise," by James H. McGraw Jr., president of McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, Inc.*

Beau Geste

Spaniards today were treated to the rare sight of United States diplomats walking not for exercise nor because of lack of gasoline of their own but as a friendly gesture. Despite the driving ban after the Anglo-American decision suspended gasoline shipments, the Spanish Foreign Office provided sufficient supplies of gasoline for all diplomatic missions in Madrid. All elements of the diplomatic corps are still driving but the American Embassy, with one of the largest staffs in Madrid, have chosen to walk with the Spaniards. – *AP dispatch from Madrid, printed in The Panama Star-Herald.*

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Total-War Department

The award of War Department decorations to other than persons, that is, human beings, is prohibited. If it is desired to recognize outstanding services of an animal or a fowl, appropriate citation may be published in unit general orders.—*A statement by Major-Gen. J. A. Ulio prohibiting dogs from receiving medals designed for soldiers, in The Ithaca, New York, Journal.*

That All-Out Effort

The original manuscript of Louella O. Parsons' new book, "The Gay Illiterate," today was among the possessions of Carnegie Library here.

The script of the famed movie editor of International News Service was promised to the library if a Pittsburgh War Bond rally audience raised $6,000,000. The crowd subscribed more than $30,000,000.—*From The New York Journal-American.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping.—THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Labor and Politics

SIR: I have just read the article by Helen Fuller entitled "Labor in Politics" (The New Republic, January 24), and I take this opportunity to correct some obvious errors therein.

In using the term "rail unions," the author appears to assume that they constitute one body and one mind, which is definitely not the case. There are twenty rail unions, and they do not act as a unit on political matters. I do not know what is meant in the next to the last paragraph of the article, where it is stated: "The deals which the Brotherhoods and the AFL have been and are entering into with all sorts of representatives on Capitol Hill are definite barriers to honest, unified labor action by local union groups."

I can assure you that the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen has entered into no such deals. On the contrary, we extend a very willing and coöperative hand to all American labor, farmer, consumer and progressive groups in this fateful campaign of 1944. As long ago as last August I called a National Legislative Conference of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen with the view in mind of this organization's taking a more specific and active part in the 1944 elections than ever before in its history. To this end, we established a Bureau for Political Action, which has been functioning full time since last September 1, and which is carrying forward our program of political education with a determination to see to it that organized labor not only votes in the 1944 elections, but that it casts its votes for democracy and against the obvious fascism that is rife in this country. Representatives of several liberal labor and farmer groups addressed our National Legislative Conference, and earnest cooperation with all liberal groups is a fundamental of our program.

Although, as president of this organization, I cannot now make specific political commitments, I am not unmindful of the more than a decade of the great human service of our world-renowned leader, Franklin D. Roosevelt. We do not propose to indulge in the luxurious ignorance of assuming that we may support someone else when we do not even know who he may be. Neither do we propose to permit nitwit critics of our great leader to induce us to turn our backs upon him and run blindly into the embracing arms of labor's enemies, who also are invariably the President's enemies. We are in a world crisis; the war has not been won; this is no time for political fourflushing. I can assure the author of "Labor and Politics" that her representation of the political position of "rail unions" is not at all accurate as applied to the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.

In my judgment, the winning of the war is the most important thing before American working men and women. Can anyone question the President's splendid war record? Anyone not bearing the responsibility of our Commander-in-Chief in these troublous times cannot know all of the reasons for all of the decisions that must be made by him. It is quite clear, however, that any of his decisions which appear to have shown a disposition "to veer to the right" were deemed by him to be necessary to maintain such a degree of national unity as we have enjoyed in this free democratic nation that permits its most economically powerful citizens to carry on a constant attack upon the Commander-in-Chief and upon the masses of citizens who toil, that the necessities of war may be manufactured and transported to the battlefronts.

If labor had fully participated in the 1942 elections, we would not have had a Congress that has forced appeasement on the home front, which too often has been erroneously interpreted as administration unfairness to labor. While the President has been carrying the ball and making very imposing gains on the world battlefronts against the fascists, labor and liberal groups have not been sufficiently effective in "running interference" against the fascists on the home front. The President still retains possession of the ball and the duty of his teammates should be clear.

We know how stubborn the large industrialists were in converting their industries to war purposes. We know that most of the American press, as well as the Congress of the United States, has done everything possible to discredit, if not persecute, the organizations of working people. In these serious times, we have even listened nonchalantly to the counsel that industry should refuse to pay its income taxes. History may record that patience in the White House, patience beyond the comprehension of ordinary men, saved this democracy from its fascist enemies at home and abroad. Because the President has sincerely tried and nobly succeeded in being a President of all the American people, American workers will not at this time trample upon a most glorious record of achievement and embrace the labor-baiters and the Roosevelt-haters. Labor must not forget that during the last decade the spokesmen who have led the attack against Roosevelt have also, for the most part, led the attack against labor and that, with few and unimportant exceptions, labor-baiters and Roosevelt-haters have much in common.

A. F. WHITNEY, President,
Cleveland, O. Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen

Good News for Japanese Americans

SIR: Reinstitution recently of Selective Service procedures for American citizens of Japanese descent means that for the first time since Pearl Harbor Japanese Americans will be subject to call for military duty on the same basis as other citizens. This announcement on the part of the War Department will, we believe, do much toward rightfully easing the present position of all loyal Americans of Japanese parentage, and is a vindication of the loyalty of the Japanese Americans.

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Restoration of the right to serve on the same basis as all other Americans is bringing about a distinct rise in morale of the Nisei, for it brings life and action to President Roosevelt's statement that "no loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the right to exercise the responsibilities of his citizenship regardless of his ancestry. . . . Americanism is a matter of mind and heart; Americanism is not and never was a matter of ancestry."

This is a realization of one of the major aims of the Japanese American Citizens' League and heartens us in our efforts eventually to secure complete restoration of our civil rights. You may be interested to know that the Japanese American Citizens' League was organized some fifteen years ago and is the only national organization of American citizens of Japanese descent working toward integration and assimilation. . . .

We print a weekly national publication called The Pacific Citizen, which is the only paper with complete coverage on news and developments concerning Japanese Americans. One of our readers has commented, "This is a small paper in size, but free in its spirit, and powerful in its truth. Because of its service in a unique field affecting directly the lives of 70,000 Japanese Americans, and indirectly, but vitally, all other citizens of this republic, and because in the days to come our hope rests on the kind of intelligence and devotion to American ideas which The Pacific Citizen represents, it deserves whatever support any of us can give."

TEIKO ISHIDA, Acting National Secretary
New York City Japanese American Citizens' League

Freedom v. Equality

SIR: I wonder if F. O. Matthiessen isn't playing with something pretty dangerous in his review of Theodore M. Greene's book on education in the issue of January 24. He suggests that the word equality is a surer guide in social thought than the word freedom. Is it? I can think of a country where equality demonstrably exists, but precious little freedom. Mr. Matthiessen professes to disagree with the notion of freedom only when it is used to mean freedom of business enterprise. But then he scoffs at Mr. Greene, who holds that "freedom has significance for us only when conceived as the freedom of individuals." Nineteenth-century stuff, says Matthiessen. But in the long run what else can freedom possibly mean but freedom for individual men? In recent years a good many liberals have become totalitarian in their thought, and I suspect they have done so because they came to value equality more highly than freedom, and because in their zeal to better the life of the masses, they lost sight of freedom for the individual man.

Brooklyn, N. Y. RICHARD H. ROVERE

SIR: I'm very glad that Mr. Rovere raised this point, since it constitutes the chief assumption, not only in my review, but in all my political thinking. I have been greatly influenced on this question by Tawney, particularly by his book on "Equality," and have long been convinced that there can be no effectual freedom in a large industrialized society unless at least a minimum basis of economic equality has been established. What men have meant by freedom in the past has varied enormously according to whether their primary image has been that of the isolated private individual, a law unto himself, or of the individual as a coöperating member of a functional social group. Inasmuch as that first image was so exaggerated by the special circumstances of our nineteenth century, it is particularly important for Americans to be aware of the dangers in trying to maintain "individualist principles of action in a collective age." (The phrase is the late T. K. Whipple's.) My chief divergence from Mr. Rovere may be that I decided some years back that "liberal" had become too loose a catch-all term to be very useful in political discussion. I would consider myself a radical democrat, and believe that the central problem for our age is to extend democracy from the political to the economic sphere, and that this can be done only by a continuing process of socialization.

Boston, Mass. F. O. MATTHIESSEN

Governor Dewey and the Schools

SIR: If Governor Dewey's present budgetary plans are not revised, New York State's education system will lose $7,500,000; New York City close to $4,000,000. This would be a disastrous blow to our city's schools, already seriously overburdened by lack of adequate facilities to cope with their many problems.

Answering wide protest, Governor Dewey has retorted that the Friedsam Formula of state aid to education is being observed. This anachronistic formula bases its appropriation on attendance rather than on register, penalizing the schools for increase in absences due to epidemics, school holidays and other conditions beyond its control. This means that an already shrunken educational budget will suffer even greater curtailment.

With a state surplus of almost $150,000,000, a program for retrenchment in education is wholly uncalled for now. We cannot neglect our children today and salvage them tomorrow; we will only incur other and more costly liabilities.

For years the education system of New York City has been geared to an economy budget. The non-appointment policy has driven hundreds of trained teachers from the schools; the scandal of the permanent-substitute system has victimized those loyal teachers who continue to teach though deprived of every protection due them; oversized classes, lack of proper guidance, remedial and recreational facilities have made their sorry contribution—these are only some of the fruits of falsely conceived "economy budgets"; and mounting delinquency makes a mockery of the proposed "economies."

This situation is of grave concern to every parent and citizen of our community. Curtailment of educational expenditures means less effective teaching and an increase in juvenile delinquency. Those interested ought to write to the Governor and the Legislature to increase the amount of state aid to education.

MRS. CHARLES SHIPMAN, Executive Secretary,
New York City The New York Teachers' Guild

From The New Republic Mail Bag

If you did nothing but sit in the New Republic office all day and read releases you would gather the impression that the level of popular culture must have risen tremendously. For whereas once upon a time the people were invited to participate in crossword puzzle, rebus, acrostic and cryptogram contests, they are now offered the opportunity to take part in literary competitions. The publishers of The Atlantic Monthly announce a $1,000 "Freedom of the Press" contest open to "newspaper readers . . . and to journalists of all ages and experience."

Articles on the freedom of the press, between 4,500 and 7,000 words in length, are to be addressed to Freedom of the Press, Atlantic Monthly, 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16, Massachusetts, not later than May 1, 1944.

The English publishers, Hutchinson and Company, announce a United Nations Literary Competition for £10,000. Awards will be distributed to the best manuscripts received in fiction, detective and thriller fiction, autobiography, history and biography, essays and belles-lettres, poetry, children's literature, philosophy of religion and general philosophy, and scientific and technical literature. The closing date is June 30, 1944. Competitors are asked to use a pseudonym on the title page of manuscripts and attach an envelope with the real name and address. Send manuscripts to 47 Princes Gate, London, S. W. 7.

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Books in Review

Southways

STRANGE FRUIT,"[1] by Lillian Smith, is the most interesting novel I have read for a long time, even though it deals with what has come to be regarded as the painfully commonplace subject of a lynching. By now the subject has been explored and exploited by hundreds of writers, Southern and Northern, white and Negro; but Miss Smith goes farther than the others into its complicated background, besides approaching it from a new point of view. She writes as a native Georgian, proud of her old and rather distinguished family, devoted to the South as a whole and fond of her neighbors in the little town where the crime took place. At the same time, her sympathies lie with the Negroes in their ramshackle houses beyond the railroad tracks. She violently rejects the myth of their inferiority, together with the whole social fabric it implies.

The lynching in her story is partly caused by a tangle of personal relationships. A white man, Tracy Deen, son of a prosperous doctor in Maxwell, Georgia, has fallen in love with an educated Negro girl named Nonnie Anderson. Nonnie's brother is in love with her too, not with any hint of incest, but still in a fiercely possessive fashion. Tracy feels a half-resentful attachment to his pious mother, who wants to control the lives of her children; she ends by making him join the church and by getting him safely engaged to a girl much like herself. When he breaks with Nonnie, who has become pregnant, her brother kills him and escapes to the North. The man lynched by mistake is Henry McIntosh, a foolish Negro who had been Tracy's foster brother and his one real friend.

But Miss Smith makes it clear that this lynching was also an episode in a struggle that has continued for three hundred years, ever since the first slaves were landed at Jamestown. By the summer of 1920, it had reached another of its critical stages. The black people were "getting biggety," so the white Georgians said; they never should have been drafted into the army. The wool-hat boys were afraid that Negroes would take their jobs in the sawmills and turpentine stills. The plantation owners couldn't find hands to pick their cotton, and some of them felt that their labor problem would be solved if a Negro was lynched—preferably a guilty Negro, but any black man would do. The leading citizens of Maxwell wanted to prevent a lynching, but most of them were afraid to interfere; and besides, their wives had been complaining of trouble with the servants. The town was excited by a religious revival coming after four months of unbroken heat. A half-witted white boy claimed that he had seen black Henry in the act of killing Tracy Deen. Thus, everything led to the lynching: history, folkways, economics, religion, even the weather and pure accident. The Negro community was reduced to a state of terror, but the whites—even those who disapproved of the crime—felt a sense of relief from tension. Bill Talley, the planter who had led the mob, said to his Negro foreman, "Reckon we better get to pickin, a Monday. Reckon you can round up plenty hands."

In telling her story, Miss Smith adopts the old and by now rather unfashionable pretense of being all-seeing and all-wise. Looking into the mind of one character after another, she describes his past career in terms of his memories. At such moments, each character is talking to himself, but for the benefit of the reader, and this fact often leads to confusion—especially when his stream of consciousness takes the form of dialogues which we are asked to believe that he remembered word for word. On the other hand, her method also gives the effect of a subject portrayed in all four dimensions. You feel that the author has guided you through Maxwell from the all-white revival tent to the African M. E. Church—not omitting a glance at the brothel; that she has introduced you to the townspeople of all classes; that she has revealed them as they were yesterday and will be tomorrow. What she does is more than painting or even sculpture; it is as if three-dimensional people were moving past you on the current of time.

Some of these people are remarkably complex and convincing. Tom Harris, the town's richest man, is a fiery prohibitionist and a sincere Christian who gives one-tenth of his income to the church; at the same time the author implies that he is conducting a love affair with a younger friend of his wife. He underpays his sawmill hands and uses defective machinery that causes many accidents, so that Maxwell is full of cripples, and yet he is essentially kind and brave; he is the only man who risks his life in an effort to stop the lynching. Set against him is a labor agitator, a poor white named Willie Echols, who screams with joy when black Henry is hanged and burned. "It was a sight, that nigger," he tells his wife. "Got what he deserved. What every one of 'em deserve." In general Miss Smith is unjust to the whole class that Willie represents. She implies, though by indirection, that the "best people" in the South could take steps toward solving the racial problem, if only the poor whites wouldn't interfere. What she doesn't say is that the poor whites have been made to suffer almost as much as the Negroes.

The least successful character in her novel is Nonnie Anderson, who seems as dim and idealized as one of Poe's heroines; and the only false dialogues are those between Nonnie and her sister. In the effort to show that both girls are well educated, the author puts words in their mouths that no sisters, Negro or white, would use in private conversations. On the other hand, Nonnie's love affair with Tracy Deen—the episode that will shock Southern readers—seems utterly convincing. Nonnie, living in a dream, will not admit to herself that there is any racial barrier between them. Tracy, always a little hostile to his own mother, had been nursed and petted by black Mamie; and in his case the experience had fixed the sexual pattern he would follow till his death. All the contacts between the two races are handled with skill. Especially you remember the Negro doctor laughing vacantly and playing the fool as he talks

[1] Strange Fruit, by Lillian Smith. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 371 pages. $2.75.

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to an uneducated white man who will follow his sound advice, if only he observes all the servile conventions. You learn, moreover, how these conventions are whipped into little Negro boys by their mothers, because—as Mamie says to her husband—"I want my boy to live till he's grown." Everything that happens in this story seems to have deep roots in childhood, in custom, in an evil past that nobody is brave enough to reject.

Since this is Lillian Smith's first novel, I expect to hear the critics describe it as "promising." If so, they will be talking nonsense, and not for the first time. There is less promise in "Strange Fruit" than in dozens of books I remember, including some of those dealing with similar themes. Miss Smith seems to lack the specifically literary gifts of William Faulkner, let us say, or Carson McCullers; and it is possible that her talents will lead her eventually into some other field than the novel. But she has done something in this book that nobody did before her: she has shown that a lynching was intimately connected with the life of a whole community; that it explains and condemns a whole social order. Her book is not a promise but an achievement.

MALCOLM COWLEY

The Senate and the Peace

The American Senate and World Peace, by Kenneth Colegrove. New York: The Vanguard Press. 209 pages. $2.

A PHILOSOPHER AT OXFORD used to say that with one idea and three facts you can make a lecture. Professor Colegrove has taken one idea and at least three major facts and made a book, "The American Senate and World Peace," which is a fitting sequel to Walter Lippmann's "Foreign Policy," the Moscow and Teheran declarations and the postwar resolutions in Congress. The idea—that our foreign policy must be made responsive to the will of the people—is backed by the facts: that the future peace depends on effective American collaboration; that the Senate has a habit of wrecking treaties, a habit which it probably has not overcome; and, finally, that the two-thirds rule for ratification is "a negation of the democratic process and a danger to the peace of the United States."

Dr. Colegrove, a professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, has made a significant contribution in this exceedingly clear analysis of the important problem of collective security and our participation in such a system. His conclusion is that our greatest danger is not in the failure of public opinion to support world organization but in the fact that a sound peace may be blocked by an irreconcilable minority in the Senate. Colegrove has found the key to our tragic mistake in the Senate during 1919-20, when a small group of Senators led by Henry Cabot Lodge blocked ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, and he is determined that it shall not happen again.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the constitutional provision requiring support of two-thirds of the Senate for the approval of a treaty has the effect of giving the control of our foreign policy to the minority. This minority control is even more emphasized when one considers that Senators from small states have the same weight in the Senate as those from large. As Professor Colegrove says, "It is actually possible for thirty-three Senators representing one-twelfth of the people of the United States to block a treaty supported by sixty-three Senators representing eleven-twelfths of the people." Of course, the 33 Senators from the least populated states would never vote as a unit but, on the other hand, we do know that certain of those Senators representing a very small segment of our people in the past exercised (and still do) influence on the foreign policy, quite out of proportion to the size of the electorate they represent.

I thoroughly agree with Professor Colegrove that, to be consistent and positive over the years, our foreign policy must be supported by the majority of our people and, further, that as long as the Senate controls the foreign policy under the two-thirds rule, this is not necessarily the case. Professor Colegrove proposes as the means toward democratization of foreign policy the abolition of the two-thirds rule by amending the Constitution to require only a simple majority in both Houses of Congress for the approval of a treaty. The need for this reform has already been recognized in many quarters and there are now pending in Congress at least five joint resolutions to amend the Constitution and authorize approval of treaties by a simple majority of the two Houses.

The Constitution should be amended and, as Professor Colegrove says, "as long as government exists, it is never too late to correct its imperfections." There are, however, several obstacles which must be overcome, including the reluctance of the people to change the fundamental law and a cumbersome and slow process of amending the Constitution. It is interesting to note that the Judiciary Committee of the Senate decided on January 17 to postpone consideration of all proposed constitutional amendments until after the war, in order that those now in uniform may have a choice in making any constitutional determination.

Of course, it is possible for the states themselves to initiate an amendment to the Constitution. If two-thirds of the state legislatures make the request, Congress is required to call a constitutional convention. An amendment thus proposed would then have to be ratified by the legislatures or conventions of three-fourths of the states. While this is not impossible and I am heartily in favor of such action by our states, I feel that we should find a surer solution to the problem. Professor Colegrove admits, somewhat reluctantly, that there already exists a democratic way of approving international agreements and that method is through joint resolution of both Houses of Congress. The author feels that this is "dangerously close to an evasion of the Constitution" and lacks the prestige and sanctity of the treaty method. I submit that in many of our most important international agreements (for example, the annexation of Texas, of Hawaii, and the reciprocal trade agreements) the joint resolution has been employed. On the other hand, comparatively insignificant agreements have taken the form of treaties. Except for a few minor matters, it would seem to me that the Executive may, in his discretion, determine whether or not a particular agreement should be submitted as a treaty or in the form of a joint resolution.

Professor Colegrove has done a thorough job of preparing his argument for ending the Senate's monopoly over the approval of treaties and it is to be hoped that there will be wide support of the proposal. Particularly enlightening

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is his analysis of the individual Senators. He has listed, "on the basis of past records and recent utterances," members who probably would oppose any treaty submitted to the Senate, and in the appendix he has compiled the complete prewar records of the isolationist Senators. These men are expected to be the nucleus of the opposition to any steps to end international anarchy.

Professor Colegrove is not the first to feel some impatience at the obstructive power of the Senate in foreign affairs. John Hay, one of the truly great Secretaries of State, had this to say: "A treaty entering the Senate is like a bull going into the arena: no one can say just how or when the final blow will fall, but one thing is certain—it will never leave the arena alive." J. W. FULBRIGHT

Dawn in the Balkans

The Long Balkan Night, by Leigh White. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 473 pages. $3.50.

THIS BOOK describes the political and military situation in the Balkans from the spring of 1940 until the fall of 1941, when Leigh White, wounded, was finally able to leave Athens and, by way of Rome and Lisbon, to return to the United States. As an observer for the Overseas News Agency (ONA) and CBS, Mr. White had visited or stayed in Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade and Athens.

Reading this lively and well informed book, one is struck by the fact that the Greeks successfully fought the Italians, while the Yugoslavs did not have a chance to fight either the Italians or the Germans, since the war ended before it was even begun. It seems, however, that American correspondents in the Balkans, as is shown by this and other books on the same subject, did not take into consideration the fact that the Balkan front could not hold up against the Germans and Italians with no help possible from France or Russia and with only minor aid from a weak Britain.

Mr. White and his colleagues, covering the short Yugoslav military campaign, were taken aback when a young Croat Communist, who had apparently refused to fight the Germans, told them: "Sooner or later the Soviet Union will enter the war and it will be the time to fight. The Soviet Union is our only salvation." And he continued: "Russia, not England, will decide the fate of the Balkans." In 1941 that was not only the opinion of the Yugoslav Communists, but of most of the Yugoslav and Balkan peasantry as well. The Yugoslav and Greek ruling classes, as well as the other Balkan ruling groups, were already doomed. Their corrupt fascist or semi-fascist dictatorships could not give the people a moral and political orientation. They had not even succeeded in giving them the necessary military preparations. The agrarian and other movements which could have been a powerful factor in the democratization of the Balkans had been disrupted by such monarchical absolutist elements as Admiral Horthy, King Boris, King Carol, King George of Greece, Prince Paul and King Zog, whose chief contribution was the creation of a fetid defeatism in that part of the world.

In 1938, during the last elections in which the people of Yugoslavia publicly voted against dictatorship, Tito wrote in a clandestine paper, "The government does everything against a brotherly alliance between the Serbs and Croats. These elections must determine whether Yugoslavia will become dependent on Germany and Italy or whether she will follow the path of democratization, of alliance between the Yugoslav peoples, and in this way save Yugoslav independence."

That was the real situation in the Balkans. The common men—the peasants left to themselves without independence and without democracy—in Greece and Yugoslavia, after military collapse went to the mountains and started their war for national liberation and for the conquest of democracy.

Unlike Robert St. John—whose "From the Land of the Silent People" remains the best and most human book on the whole Balkan tragedy—Mr. White goes back again and again to the Serbo-Croatian feud. He tries passionately to be objective. But in the middle of the Balkan microcosm, with all its diversities and complexities, it is dangerous to jump to conclusions based on short and sudden impressions. Mr. White writes that "in Yugoslavia the bulk of the fascists were Croats." He forgets that fascism as an ideology had its counterpart in Serbia as well as in Croatia. There is little difference between Pavelich and D. Ljotich, the anti-Semite fascist ideologue of Serbia, not to mention the previous semi-fascist governments like that of the former Premiers B. Jevtich and Stoyadinovich. Nobody can now believe that during the German attack on Yugoslavia "it was the Serbs and Serbs alone who fought and died in defense of Yugoslavia." Many Slovenes and Croats died too. But the truth is that very few really fought this abortive war. When Mr. White continues, "We cannot consign the Serbs to oblivion simply because the Croats are on better terms with Russia," it is obvious that he has not understood Serbian political history. Since the nineteenth century the Serbs have always looked toward Russia. Pro-Russian feeling has been always very strong; not only sentimentally as in Croatia and Slovenia, but also politically. It is only the stupid policy of a small ultra-nationalist Serbian clique in exile that has betrayed the real interests of the Serbian people in relation to Russia.

Mr. White says that the Partisan movement originated in Croatia. The fact is that Tito began his activities in Belgrade and the first Partisan victories were in Serbia. Tito's general staff is composed chiefly of Serbians, and Serbs hold the majority in the provisional government.

There are many points on which every person interested in the democratic future of the Balkans must agree with Mr. White. One is the problem of monarchy and of a Balkan democratic confederation. With the exception of the Karageorgevich dynasty in Yugoslavia, the other dynasties in the Balkans are foreign and have no popular roots. Monarchical constitutional legitimacies in the Balkans do not exist. They are, as Ferrero would say, quasi-legitimacies *à la* Louis Philippe. It seems impossible that a Balkan democratic confederation can be realized under the monarchies. Unfortunately, as Mr. White points out, until now the preponderant interest of Great Britain, and secondarily of the United States, has been to save the monarchies rather than to help in the construction of a democratic federation.

Russia alone, up to now, has found a formula for the Balkan people which can give to the Balkan nationalities the possibility of preserving their national, cultural and religious autonomy through the principle of equality.

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Russia has identified her fight with a general popular war. This is why the southern Slav masses and a great part of the Balkan peoples have identified their struggle with the struggle of Russia.

The best hope for the Balkans would be the creation of a new world in which a union could be realized between the Russian and the American ways of life, a course that would help "the Balkan nation to become a part of the civilized modern world." BOGDAN RADITSA

Behold by Their Grave Light

A Wreath for the Sea, by Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Arrow Editions. Distributed by New Directions (Norfolk, Connecticut). 122 pages. $2.50.

How good it is to read a book of poems not frantic with a message, not fancy with frilly fashions, using words gravely, for music's sake, or brightly, for that of image; literate without pedantry or affectation; sensitive without being neurotic or too full of nostalgia; moved but not excited; if not quite up to a pitch of high and joyous serenity, yet contemplative and calm, without complacence! How good, how rare; but these blessings are vouchsafed to us in Robert Fitzgerald's collection of poems, entitled "A Wreath for the Sea." Yes; and the modest title is not without its ironic implication.

The general intention of the author, states the jacket, was "to create a sequence, setting various realms of imagery, personal and impersonal, in relief against each other." The principle which determines the arrangement will not be as clear to the reader as it is in the mind of the poet. It never is; moreover, Mr. Fitzgerald has been too polite to remind the reader that here and there will be found translations. Good translations, too; though, even so, I think that "broken-winded," in the Catullus poem, is unnecessarily euphemistic.

Beyond the immediate interest of the translations, the lover of Latin will rejoice to see how the grace and elegance of that tongue pervades Mr. Fitzgerald's pages. It is a great debt he owes his reading here, a debt he repays with high courtesy. Many of the poems bear Latin titles, and the collection as a whole might have been named, in other days, Eclogues or Silvae. Not subservience to the letter of tradition—and the Latin tradition is romantic as well as classical—not subservience, but understanding love, and artistic use, speak in Mr. Fitzgerald's lines.

> . . . I imagine
> Of time and the great dead, they too
> Correctly make a tune with me; let me
> Behold by their grave light my minuscule
> Part in the swaying and tranquil grandeur here.

This must not be taken to imply that this poet turns away from the present, facing only the light of a gentler and kinder imaginary day. He can see, with satirical insight, figures in an advertisement, as in the first poem of the book; a contemporary with admiration, as in the first of the "Portraits"; a less admired contemporary, as in the Eliotish second of that series; a ball game, in "Cobb Would Have Caught It"; automobiles on the road, in "Windshield"; the wreck of Europe, in "Sympathy of Peoples":

> The great mouth of hunger closes
> On swineherd and princess, on the air
> Of jongleur and forest bell; Grendel
> Swims from the foul deep again . . .
> With whitening morning on the waste
> You may discern through binoculars
> A long line of the shawled and frozen,
> Moving yet motionless, as if those
> Were populations whom the sun had failed
> And the malicious moon enchanted
> To wander and be still forever
> The prey of wolves and bestial mazes.

Reader, buy this book; read it, and keep it. For my money, two poems in the collection, "Celestine," and "Strophe and Antistrophe," make it, were there nothing else, well worth the price. ROLFE HUMPHRIES

China in Ferment

Shark's Fins and Millet, by Ilona Ralf Sues. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 331 pages. $3.

It seems hardly possible that any American could read this book without thoroughly liking both the Chinese people and Miss Sues who writes about them. An impression of integrity, intelligence and good humor lightens every page of this record of a Polish woman who, disgusted by the double talk and evasions of international politics, leaves a job with the Anti-Opium Information Bureau in Geneva to go to China where "something constructive was going on." She arrives in China in 1936, and leaves in 1941 as the National Government is preparing to evacuate Hankow for the long trek inland to Chungking. Her book is an account of what she did and saw and heard in China during this period.

It is a very personal record, full of anecdotes, odd information and sharp characterizations. She meets a vast assortment of interesting people—major and minor officials, students, doctors, refugees, American flyers, celebrities, both Chinese and foreign, a "pink" bishop, a "respectable" gangster-millionaire. She is interested in people and her characters come to life; she is interested in landscape and in how people live in their towns, and her picture of China unfolds with a vividness that will make those familiar with it nostalgic, and those unfamiliar tantalized. Miss Sues, however, has not written a simple travelogue of personal experience. What gives her book focus is her concern for ". . . the little man, the little woman . . . the Nameless Builders of New China." Because of this concern, all of her experiences become significant illustrations of what she describes as the two conflicting trends in modern China: the trend toward democracy exemplified by the people's struggle for economic equality and political freedom; the trend toward absolutism, exemplified by those who would frustrate the democratic movement. The leaders of the first, she finds, are the so-called "Communists" who practise economic equality and democracy in their armies and the territories they govern. The leaders of the second are the reactionary, largely pro-Japanese elements in the Kuomintang and the National Government.

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The body of her book adds up to a documentation of the contrast between the Kuomintang regime and the regime of the "Communists"—a contrast in attitudes, points of view, aims and practices. Miss Sues uses her own experience as a base for her comparisons. She works directly with Mme. Chiang Kai-shek and her Australian adviser, W. H. Donald, in an abortive whirlwind attempt to put Chinese foreign publicity on a foreign-style basis. Later, she holds the job of foreign broadcaster for the Political Department of the Military Affairs Commission. From these and other experiences, she observes at close range the self-seeking and anti-democratic obstructionism which she finds largely general among Kuomintang official circles. It is also from personal experience that she judges the "Communist" regime. She visits their villages in Shansi and their capital city at Yenan and reports a spirit of cooperation and self-sacrifice that is gradually reshaping the whole economy and outlook for millions of Chinese peasants, students, soldiers and technicians. There is only space for a single illustration. In the Partisan territories, Miss Sues reports, " . . . not one person died of famine. There was a bowl of millet for everyone. . . ." In the Kuomintang-controlled areas, where the officials feasted on shark's-fin soup and other delicacies, "60,000 civilians died of starvation a day" in Honan alone, although granaries were bursting with a four years' crop of hoarded grain.

Miss Sues does not absolve Chiang Kai-shek of responsibility for the anti-democratic aspects of the regime of which he is titular leader. She feels, however, that he must be given support as a useful symbol for the united front against Japan. After the war she sees the solution for Chinese poverty in the growth of coöperatives and the expansion of the kind of administration that is now functioning successfully in the Shansi and border regions controlled by the Partisans.

Miss Sues does not labor her political opinions. Her book could be read and enjoyed merely as a human-interest document. On this level there can be no complaints whatsoever, for Miss Sues has admirably communicated her own attractive personality and the great charm of the Chinese people. On the political side, the weakness of her analysis lies in her failure to make explicit the role of Western imperialism in China and the extent to which the existence of "unequal treaties," international settlements and various other special privileges have, on the one hand, hampered China in the settlement of her own political problems, and on the other, directly helped the advance of Japanese aggression. HELEN MEARS

Bartlett's Notations

Tomorrow Always Comes, by Vernon Bartlett. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 159 pages. $2.

BETWEEN two excellent editorials on the state of the world and the challenge of the future, Mr. Bartlett, who is one of Britain's best newspapermen and an anti-Munich M. P., has sandwiched a cautionary "diary of the future," which was serialized recently in The Nation. Beginning with the collapse of the German army in southern Austria, he follows an exciting sequence of events down to the peace conference, which he leaves unfinished, but not without gloomy comments on the inter-Allied dissensions that are threatening to wreck it.

As Bartlett very well knows, history is unlikely to substantiate the details with which he has filled out his grim outline of things to come. But if Hitler isn't caught trying to escape and murdered by German workmen and if Ribbentrop isn't disposed of as a "traitor" by fellow Nazis, the main argument that we will achieve a smashing military victory and a muddled peace is difficult to contradict. One welcomes the first conclusion and finds it hard to deny the strong possibility of the second, unless, as Bartlett pleads in his final pages, we act upon Thomas Paine's dictum: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." Only a radical reconstruction of society can prevent the cyclical recurrence of the wars that are implicit in our present social disorder. But the world is so completely in the control of those who would rather prop and patch the shaky edifice than demolish it that Bartlett's tomorrow will be a long time coming. GEORGE MAYBERRY

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A Reader's List

PEOPLES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA, by Bruno Lasker (Knopf, $3). An interesting if not always strictly relevant discussion, against a background of solid yet insecurely organized knowledge concerning mores, techniques and cultures, of the problems which the liberation of Southeast Asia will raise for us. Part One provides the background sociological material, while the second and third parts analyze the nature and consequences of the Western impact in the past and what may be the role of the white powers in the future. The only criticism here is that Mr. Lasker, by understating the integrating of local cultures, tends, if anything, to underestimate the gravity of the tragedy which lies ahead unless a profound change is effected in Western policies. Mr. Lasker, who is skeptical concerning the degree to which the condition of exploitation has already become one of hardship, believes that the peoples, after victory over the Japanese, will not readily accept their former colonial status. The future is with nationalism, he believes, though apparently he considers that this is not necessarily incompatible with the reëstablishment of the Dutch Empire. The book is written in a pleasant and lucid style.

INDIA AGAINST THE STORM, by Post Wheeler (Dutton, $3.50). A not very profound but easily readable account of Indian political developments in the last twenty-five years. The method is anecdotal and discursive rather than analytical. Dr. Wheeler is not favorably impressed by Mr. Gandhi and as a whole takes a low view of the Congress. He believes that the Cripps proposals, in their final form, represented a serious effort to solve the Indian problem. In general his opinions on such matters as Pakistan, Communal Conflicts, etc., are such as would be acceptable to the average supporter of British rule. The author believes that London sincerely intends to grant Dominion status to India and that this status will confer the right of secession. Not an essential book even for the conservative specialist.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF WORLD ORDER, by Vera Micheles Dean (Foreign Policy Association, 25 cents). Here is the ablest and most even-tempered summary of the major postwar political issues that has come out in a long time. We are told quite bluntly that we will not give to the future a heritage of sustained peace if the nations fail to find a common cause and a common ground now. There is no political or economic or logical reason, says Mrs. Dean, why we should not utilize such organs as the Combined Boards in the postwar period. These boards are the "real living substance of wartime international coöperation" and can be easily adapted to the task of winning the peace. We are reminded, too, that territorial decapitation and economic isolation are no certain answer to the German question. And the solution will be strongly influenced by the most powerful factor in the present political climate—Russia's search for security. European federation, colonial imperialism, international coöperation and postwar economic problems are all carefully weighed in a markedly effective plea for world order.

MR. BOWLING BUYS A NEWSPAPER, by Donald Henderson (Random, $2). "Mr. Bowling had reached such an intense pitch of despair about life that he had thought of doing a murder and more or less making it reasonably easy for the police to catch and arrest him." The trouble is that the law doesn't seem to be interested in Mr. B., so that he is forced to compound his murder—running the total up to five. A decidedly out-of-the-way item which is recommended to readers who are more interested in people than in how the murderer got out of the sealed room.

Contributors

EDWIN A. LAHEY is a member of the staff of the Washington Bureau of The Chicago Daily News. He is one of the country's leading labor reporters.

RICHARD H. ROVERE, formerly the managing editor of Common Sense, is now a free-lance writer in New York City.

ARTHUR HEPNER, a member of the editorial staff of The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, has contributed to The New Republic and other magazines in this country, Canada and England.

REID E. JACKSON, who holds a doctorate from Ohio State University, is a professor of Psychology and Education at Southern University at Scotlandville, Louisiana. He is on the advisory board, Youth Division, of the NAACP and is a member of the executive committee of the All-Southern Negro Youth Congress. He is a frequent contributor to School and Society, The Journal of Negro Education, Crisis, and Educational Administration and Supervision.

J. W. FULBRIGHT is the Representative in Congress from the Third District in Arkansas. He has now entered the senatorial race and says, "I hope to be in the Senate to do something about the very thing that Colegrove discusses."

BOGDAN RADITSA, a native Yugoslavian, walked out of his official post as Press Chief of the Royal Yugoslav Government in the United States because he considers Tito's provisional rule the real popular government of Yugoslavia. He is the author of "Conversations with Guglielmo Ferrero" and "The Agony of Europe."

ROLFE HUMPHRIES is a poet and critic whose latest volume of poetry is "Out of the Jewel," published by Scribner's.

HELEN MEARS has an article on the Japanese Emperor in the winter issue of The Yale Review and The New Yorker is currently running a series of her sketches of life in Japan. She is at present working on another book about American foreign relations in the Far East, with special emphasis on a consideration of Japan's problems, psychology and future in the postwar world.

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